

City of Sacramento  
**City Council - 5PM Report**  
915 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814  
[www.cityofsacramento.org](http://www.cityofsacramento.org)

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File ID: 2025-01199

6/24/2025

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**[Pass for Publication] Ordinance Listing 5850 Freeport Boulevard as a Landmark on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (M24-014)**

File ID: 2025-01199

**Location:** 5850 Freeport Blvd, APN: 035-0034-016-0000, District 5

**Recommendation:** 1) Review an **Ordinance** listing 5850 Freeport Boulevard as a landmark on the Sacramento register of historic and cultural resources; and 2) pass for publication the ordinance title per Sacramento City Charter section 32(c) for City Council consideration on July 22, 2025.

**Contact:** Sean de Courcy, Preservation Director, (916) 808-2796, [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org), Community Development Department

**Presenter:** None

**Attachments:**

- 1-Description/Analysis
- 2-Ordinance
- 3-Historic Resource Evaluation for 5850 Freeport Boulevard
- 4-Public Comments

**Description/Analysis**

**Issue Detail:** In May 2024, Staff received a planning application requesting the demolition of the building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard due to interior fire damage. Consistent with City Code section 17.604.600, within 45 days of a request to demolish a building 50 years old or older, the preservation director is required to make a preliminary determination whether the building should be nominated for listing on the Sacramento register. The owner retained the services of SWCA environmental consultants who prepared and submitted a historic resources evaluation. Concurrently, the Sacramento County Historical Society retained Brunzell Historical to prepare a second historic resource evaluation for the building. The SWCA report recommended the building as ineligible as a historic landmark, while the Brunzell Historical report recommended the building as an eligible historic resource. The two reports and the request to demolish the building were routed to preservation advocacy and neighborhood groups; 61 comments were received in response to the routing. Forty-Nine letters were received in total. One comment in particular, submitted by Preservation Sacramento, noted that the building was identified in the City's recently completed

African American Experience and LGBTQ+ Historic Experience historic context segments. Preservation Sacramento also noted that in the opinion its board of directors, the building was potentially eligible for listing on the Sacramento register for its association with the Japanese-American developer Gonzo Sakai who built the building, and for the Nisei bowling leagues that met in the building since its construction.

In accordance with City Code section 17.604.600, the preservation director reviewed the record, including both historical evaluations and all public comments received, and determined that there is a reasonable likelihood the building qualifies for listing on the Sacramento register under Criterion i (City Code, § 17.604.210.A.1.a.1.) for its association with Sacramento's Japanese American and LGBTQ+ communities, with particular significance as a Japanese-American (Nisei) gathering place.

Staff presented a statement of nomination to the preservation director who concluded at a public hearing on January 30, 2025, that the resource appears eligible for listing in the Sacramento register pursuant to the criterion in City Code section 17.604.210.A.1.a.i. Staff has prepared a draft ordinance (Attachment 2) for review by the preservation commission, which is responsible for reviewing the ordinance and making a recommendation to the city council regarding the eligibility of 5850 Freeport Boulevard (Nominated Resource) for listing on the Sacramento register. The preservation commission held a hearing and passed a motion recommending the City Council adopt an ordinance listing the Nominated Resource as a landmark on the Sacramento register.

A notice of the public hearing describing the proposed landmark listing was sent to the property owner of 5850 Freeport Boulevard as required by City Code section 17.604.230.

The South Land Park Neighborhood Association, Pocket Greenhaven Community Association, Freeport Renovation on The Move (FROM), Preservation Sacramento, Sacramento County Historical Society, Sacramento Modern, Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522, Sacramento Regional Fire Museum received notice of the hearing and submitted letters supporting the nomination. Forty-Seven letters in support of the nomination and two letters in opposition were received from residents. Staff have met with the owners who have expressed some concerns about the potential listing on the Sacramento register.

**Policy Considerations:** The city council has found "that significant aspects of the city's rich and diverse historic resources deserve recognition and preservation to foster an understanding of our heritage, and to promote the public health and safety and the economic and general welfare of the people of the city. The preservation and continued use of historic resources are effective tools to sustain and revitalize neighborhoods and business districts within the city, enhance the city's economic, cultural and aesthetic standing, its identity, its livability, marketability and urban character." (City Code, § 17.604.100.A.) To this end, the city code directs the preservation director, to "make preliminary determinations relative to properties' eligibility for listing on the Sacramento register" and to "initiate proceedings to nominate resources for listing on the Sacramento

register." (City Code, §§ 17.604.100.C.2 and 17.604.220).

The nomination of the building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard for listing as a historic landmark on the Sacramento register is consistent with Sacramento 2040 General Plan goal HCR-2.3, which provides for the identification and preservation of historical and cultural resources. General Plan policy HCR-2.3 states, "The City shall maintain and update the Sacramento register of historic and cultural resources on a regular basis, including proactively identifying and listing additional unidentified landmarks and historic districts..."

**Economic Impacts:** Not applicable.

**Environmental Considerations:** The listing of the Nominated Resource as a historic landmark on the Sacramento register is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15308. Section 15308 exempts from review acts that are undertaken to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. Listing the Nominated Resource as a historic landmark would ensure that future development on the site would undergo preservation review, as part of the city's site plan and design review process prior to the granting of any entitlements, thereby protecting the historic resource, which would be considered part of the environment.

**Sustainability:** Not applicable.

**Commission/Committee Action:** On January 30, 2025, the preservation director, in conformance with City Code section 17.604.220, held a public hearing, reviewed the historic analysis prepared by Kara Brunzell, M.A., Brunzell Historical (Attachment 3) and concurred with a draft statement of nomination and requested staff prepare a draft ordinance (Attachment 2) for review and consideration by the preservation commission. On May 21, 2025, the preservation commission held a hearing and passed a motion recommending the City Council adopt an ordinance listing the Nominated Resource as a landmark on the Sacramento register.

**Rationale for Recommendation:** Listing of the building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard as a historic landmark on the Sacramento register is consistent with the Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code (chapter 17.604) and the goals of the 2040 General Plan. Furthermore, listing the nominated resource on the Sacramento register will help ensure its preservation and encourage rehabilitation consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The property is associated with the commercial development of the South Land Park area of Sacramento in the mid-twentieth century and with the transformation of Freeport Boulevard into a commercial corridor. It is also associated with the expanding postwar popularity of bowling as a sport played by women and children as well as men. It exemplifies the postwar rise of the suburban

bowling center in Sacramento, a purpose-built bowling facility in which the sport was the primary activity. Constructed outside the traditional urban core, these facilities included amenities such as restaurants, meeting rooms, nurseries, free parking, and cocktail lounges. Land Park Bowl was particularly important as a gender-neutral recreational center for people of all ages since the newly developed neighborhood lacked a downtown area with a high density of traditional quasi-public recreational spaces like social clubs, lodges, neighborhood bars, and restaurants. The nominated property is the last purpose-built and intact bowling alley from this era in the city of Sacramento.

The property is of particular significance to the local Japanese American Community. Land Park Bowl was developed by Gonzo Sakai, a Japanese American Issei, and served as a popular venue for Nisei bowling leagues in Sacramento. The site reflects an important chapter in Sacramento's Japanese American community history, including its contributions to recreational and social integration during and after World War II. Additionally, the property has also been identified in the Sacramento LGBTQ+ Historic Experience Project historic context statement as a venue for the River City Bowlers, a prominent LGBTQ+ bowling league, including the team "Four Brothas and a Sistah." Therefore, the building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard meets the criterion for listing on the Sacramento register under City Code section 17.604.210.A.1.a.i because of its association with the postwar popularity of bowling and for its association with the local Japanese American and LGBTQ+ community.

**Figure 1: 5850 Freeport Boulevard**



**Figure 2: Nisei Old timers' Bowling League Team, c. 1970**



**Figure 3: Owner Gonzo Sakai, Rev. Senshow Sakai and the Warren brothers breaking ground, 1960 (Sacramento Union).**



*The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and association. (City Code, § 17.604.210.A.1.b.)*

The building retains a high degree of historic integrity in all six aspects. The building is in its original location, the design elements at the time of construction are largely intact with minimal alterations, the surrounding setting of Freeport Boulevard has remained intact, the workmanship present on the building is nearly identical to when it was built, and finally the building retains the ability to convey its association with the Japanese and LGBTQ+ communities due to its continued usage as a bowling alley up to the point of the fire.

*The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard has significant historical worth, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, protect and further the goals and purposes of this chapter (City Code, § 17.604.210.A..1.c.)*

The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard has significant historic worth. Up until the fire, it had been well-maintained and retains a high level of integrity. 5850 Freeport Boulevard is a significant property since it is the last purpose-built and intact bowling alley from this era in the city of Sacramento. It has exceptional cultural importance, particularly to the Japanese-American community as evidenced by the substantial number of public comments received in support of listing as a landmark, along with the LGBTQ+ community due to its identification in the City's LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement.

**Financial Considerations:** Not applicable.

**Local Business Enterprise (LBE):** Not applicable.

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_**

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

[Date Adopted]

**AN ORDINANCE LISTING 5850 FREEPORT BOULEVARD (LAND PARK BOWL) AS A LANDMARK  
ON THE SACRAMENTO REGISTER OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

**BACKGROUND**

- A. The city council has found “that significant aspects of the city’s rich and diverse historic resources deserve recognition and preservation to foster an understanding of our heritage, and to promote the public health and safety and the economic and general welfare of the people of the city. The preservation and continued use of historic resources are effective tools to sustain and revitalize neighborhoods and business districts within the city, enhance the city’s economic, cultural and aesthetic standing, its identity and its livability, marketability and urban character.” (Sacramento City Code, § 17.604.100.A.)
- B. To this end, the city code provides a mechanism for listing landmarks, historic districts, and contributing resources on the Sacramento register of historic and cultural resources (“Sacramento register”).
- C. On January 30, 2025, the preservation director reviewed a statement of nomination and determined that the building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (Land Park Bowl) is eligible for listing on the Sacramento register a landmark. On March 19, 2025, the preservation commission concurred with the findings of the preservation director and recommended the city council list the building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (Land Park Bowl) as a landmark on the Sacramento register.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:**

**SECTION 1**

- A. 5850 Freeport Boulevard (Land Park Bowl) meets the requirements for listing as a landmark on the Sacramento register as follows:
  - i. The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation. (City Code, § 17.604.210.A.1.a.i).

Land Park Bowl was particularly important as a gender-neutral recreational center for people of all ages since the newly developed neighborhood lacked a downtown area with a high density of traditional quasi-public recreational spaces like social clubs, lodges, neighborhood bars, and restaurants. The nominated property is the last purpose-built and intact bowling alley from this era in the city of Sacramento.

The property is of particular significance to the local Japanese American Community. Land Park Bowl was developed by Gonzo Sakai, a Japanese American Issei, and served as a popular venue for Nisei bowling leagues in Sacramento. The site reflects an important chapter in Sacramento's Japanese American community history, including its contributions to recreational and social integration during and after World War II. Additionally, the property has also been identified in the LGBTQ+ Historic Experience Project historic context statement as a venue for the River City Bowlers, a prominent LGBTQ+ bowling league, including the team "Four Brothas and a Sistah." Therefore, the property at 5850 Freeport Boulevard meets the criterion for listing on the Sacramento register under City Code section 17.604.210.A.1.a.i for its association with the postwar popularity of bowling and for its association with the local Japanese American and LGBTQ+ community.

- ii. The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (Land Park Bowl) has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and association, as judged with reference to the criterion in City Code section 17.604.210.A.1.a. (City Code, § 17.604.210.A.1.b.)

The building retains a high degree of historic integrity in all six aspects. The building is in its original location, the design elements at the time of construction are largely intact with minimal alterations, the surrounding setting of Freeport Boulevard has remained intact, the workmanship present on the building is nearly identical to when it was built, and finally the building retains the ability to convey its association with the Japanese and LGBTQ+ communities due to its continued usage as a bowling alley up to the point of the fire.

- iii. The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard has significant historical worth, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, protect and further the goals and purposes of chapter 17.604 of the City Code. (City Code, § 17.604.210.A.1.c.)

The building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard has significant historic worth. Up until the fire, it had been well-maintained and retains a high level of integrity. 5850 Freeport Boulevard is a significant property since it is the last purpose-built and intact bowling alley from this era in the city of Sacramento. It has exceptional cultural importance, particularly to the Japanese American community as evidenced by the substantial number of public comments received in support of listing as a landmark, along with the LGBTQ+ community due to its identification in the City's LGBTQ+ Historic Context Statement.

- iv. The city council has considered the factors set forth in City Code section 17.604.210.A.2 and determined that none of them apply to the listing of 5850 Freeport Boulevard.

**Table of Contents:**

Exhibit A: Significant Features and Characteristics

#### A. Significant Features and Characteristics

Constructed as a bowling alley in 1960 by Japanese American developer, Gonzo Sakai, the property retains its overall identity with a high amount of historic integrity. The building retains most of its original design aspects and signifies its usage as a bowling alley. Prominent features of the building include the front canopy supported by an A-shaped metal frame near the entrance, low-pitched side-gable roof spanning a large distance, and concrete block construction. The property is of significant importance to the Japanese American and LGBTQ+ communities, who frequented the bowling alley to play in recreational bowling leagues.



**5850 Freeport Boulevard**



Nisei Old timers' Bowling League Team, c. 1970



Owner Gonzo Sakai, Rev. Senshow Sakai and the Warren brothers breaking ground, 1960  
(Sacramento Union).



November 13, 2024

Sacramento Historical Society  
Firefighters Burn Institute  
c/o Gregg Lukenbill  
1081 38<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95816

Subject: Historical Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California.

Dear Gregg,

This letter report and the attached DPR 523 forms comprise the Historical Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California.

### **Methodology**

Brunzell Historical staff conducted online research through the Sacramento County Assessor Recorder as well as Ancestry.com, Newspapers.com, and other websites in order to develop relevant historic contexts and land-use history of the property. Photographs of the historic-era building and neighborhood setting from November 2024 were provided by Gregg Lukenbill. The property was evaluated according to the relevant National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and Sacramento criteria for historic eligibility. The property was documented on DPR 523 forms as required by the California Environmental Quality Act as (CEQA).

### **Summary of Findings**

Because this work was completed pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the historic-era resource was evaluated for CRHR eligibility. The property was also evaluated for NRHP and local Sacramento eligibility. The property historically significant under Criterion A/1/a.i for its association with the postwar development of South Land Park and transformation of Freeport Boulevard into a commercial corridor as well as with the dominant popularity of bowling as a gender-neutral recreational activity for people of all ages during the postwar era. It is also significant under Criterion C/3/a.iii-v for its Mid-Century Modern Googie commercial architecture. The property is recommended eligible for listing on NRHP, CRHR, and Sacramento register under criteria A/1/a.i and C/3/a.iii-v.

### **National Register of Historic Places**

In conjunction with the following NRHP criteria, sites must be assessed for integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property may be considered eligible to the NRHP if it retains sufficient integrity of the elements listed above and it:

- A. is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

- C. 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 or distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- D. yields, or may be likely to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the area/region.

### **California Register of Historical Resources**

The CRHR criteria are based on NRHP criteria. For a property to be eligible for inclusion on the CRHR, one or more of the following criteria must be met:

- 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;
- 2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
- 3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; and/or
- 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.

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, the CRHR requires that sufficient time has passed since a resource's period of significance to "obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resources." (CCR 4852 [d][2]). Fifty years is normally considered sufficient time for a potential historical resource, and in order that the evaluation remains valid for a minimum of five years after the date of this report, all resources older than 45 years will be evaluated. The CRHR also requires that a resource possess integrity. This is defined as the ability for the resource to convey its significance through seven aspects: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

### **Sacramento Register of Historic And Cultural Resources**

The Sacramento Register is a local historic register of historic properties. Significance criteria are based on standards set forth by the National Park Service for the NRHP, though they are stated slightly differently.

A property or district is eligible for the Sacramento Register when it meets the following significance criteria:

- i. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation,
- ii. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction,
- iii. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction,
- iv. It represents the work of an important creative individual or master,
- v. It possesses high artistic values, or

vi. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information

In addition to meeting one or more of the above significance criteria, a property must retain integrity in order to be locally eligible. A resource that meets the above criteria will be locally listed if it has significant historic or architectural worth, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, protect and further the goals and purposes of the City of Sacramento's Historic Preservation Program.

## **Evaluation**

Criterion A/1/a.i: The bowling alley property at 5850 Freeport Boulevard is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The property is associated with the commercial development of the South Land Park area of Sacramento in the mid-twentieth century and with the transformation of Freeport Boulevard into a commercial corridor. It is also associated with the expanding postwar popularity of bowling as a sport played by women and children as well as men. It exemplifies the postwar rise of the suburban bowling center in Sacramento, a purpose-built bowling facility in which the sport was the primary activity. Constructed outside the traditional urban core, these facilities included amenities such as restaurants, meeting rooms, nurseries, free parking, and cocktail lounges. Land Park Bowl was particularly important as a gender-neutral recreational center for people of all ages since the newly-developed neighborhood lacked a downtown area with a high density of traditional quasi-public recreational spaces like social clubs, lodges, neighborhood bars, and restaurants. Therefore, the property is recommended eligible to the NRHP, CRHR, and Sacramento register under Criterion A/1/a.i.

Criterion B/2: The commercial property at 5850 Freeport Boulevard is not associated with the life of persons important to our history. Research has revealed no important professional accomplishments or impacts on local history by individuals associated with the property, and the property type has limited potential for significant association with important persons. Therefore, the property lacks the association required for eligibility under Criterion B/2. The property is recommended not eligible to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion B/2.

Criterion C/3/a.ii-v: The property is significant for its architecture. Land Park Bowl was designed and constructed by a well-known local company, Winston Steel Works. The steel-span roof structure was believed at the time of its construction to be the largest in Northern California. Moreover, Winston Steel Works was Sacramento's only prefabricated steel producer at the time. It is an excellent example of a Mid-Century Modern bowling alley, many of which have been demolished or redeveloped in Sacramento, making them increasingly rare. Its dramatic folded plate roof form, concrete construction, geometric shapes (main entrance awning), and eye-catching space-age entrance sculpture designed to attract the attention of passing motorists are characteristic of the Googie commercial architectural style as described in the Sacramento Mid-Century Modern Historic Context Statement. For these reasons, the property is individually eligible to the NRHP, CRHR, and local register under Criterion C/3/a.ii-v.

Criterion D/4/a.vi: In rare instances, buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies and be significant under Criterion D/4. 5850 Freeport Boulevard is an example of well-understood types of construction and does not appear to be a principal source of important information in this regard.

Historic integrity is defined as the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during its historic period. There are seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Loss of integrity, if sufficiently great, overwhelms significance, rendering a property ineligible for historic listing. Land Park Bowl has not been moved and therefore retains integrity of location. The composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure, and style of the building have not been significantly altered. Although the loss of original signage has somewhat degraded integrity of design, other significant features of its original design have been retained and therefore the property retains the ability to convey its original design significance. The building's integrity of materials and workmanship is evident in the survival of original exterior details such as its dramatic folded plate roof, concrete construction, and Googie-style entrance details with geometric triangular steel sculpture. The property retains sufficient significant physical characteristics from its original construction to convey its historic qualities and therefore retains integrity of feeling. Recent use as a bowling alley and the presence of the physical features that convey its original architectural characteristics allow it to convey integrity of association. Therefore, the building conveys its historic significance through all seven aspects of integrity.

The property is recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP, CRHR, and Sacramento register under criteria A/1/a.i and C/3/a.ii-v.

### **Evaluator Qualifications**

I meet the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications for both History and Architectural History (as defined in 36 CFR, Part 61). I hold a Master's degree in Public History and have worked in multiple facets of historic preservation and cultural resource evaluation since 2007. I established Brunzell Historical to provide built environment regulatory compliance and historic landmark nomination services in 2012. I have served as a consulting historian and project manager on historical research investigations for federal, state, and local governments. I am proficient in the recordation, inventory, and evaluation of historic resources using the NRHP and CRHR criteria; expertise includes Section 106 compliance for transportation and telecommunications projects. I am experienced in applying the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to both large-scale survey projects and individual historic-period resources, as well as application of California Public Resources Code 5024.5 to state-owned historic buildings.

Please contact me by phone at 707/290-2918 or e-mail at [kara.brunzell@brunzellhistorical.com](mailto:kara.brunzell@brunzellhistorical.com) with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Kara Brunzell, M.A.  
Brunzell Historical

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

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 12

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

**P1. Other Identifier:** AMF Land Park Lanes

**\*a. County** Sacramento

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

**\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad** Sacramento East **Date** 1967 **T** 8N; **R** 4E; **1/4 of Sec** ; **B.M.**

c. Address 5850 Freeport Blvd **City** Sacramento **Zip** 95822

d. **UTM:** (give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone ; mE/ mN

**e. Other Locational Data:** (e.g., **parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate**) APN 035-0034-016-0000

**\*P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)  
The 2.53-acre property is located in a commercial area in South Land Park, across from the Sacramento Executive Airport. The one-story Mid-Century Modern Googie style bowling alley occupies approximately half of its parcel, with paved parking areas to the east and north. The building is set back approximately 90 feet from Freeport Blvd and is roughly L-shaped in plan. It is concrete construction with steel truss roof support structure. It has a dramatic folded plate roof comprised of a low-pitch gabled roof on its large primary volume and an upward-pitched shed roof on projecting entry volume at the primary (east) elevation. There is a cut-out opening in the shed roof at the main entrance which is pierced by a tall triangular steel sculpture. The entrance is fitted with fully-glazed aluminum double doors with glass sidelights. A projecting awning above the entrance mimics the upward pitch of the shed roof. A secondary entrance on the south end of the main elevation is fitted with a painted-over glazed door with a transom. There is a small fixed window to its left. A small concrete masonry unit volume with large vents on its main elevation projects from the front of the building. It is sheltered by its own upward-pitched shed roof. The word "BOWL" is painted on the main elevation, to the left of the main entrance. A large freestanding sign advertising the bowling alley is in front of the main elevation. An entrance on the north elevation is fitted with double glazed aluminum doors. Side and rear facades lack decorative features or references to Googie architecture. The building is not in use, but its exterior appears to be in good condition.

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6, 1-3 story commercial property.

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



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) Photograph 1: 5850 Freeport Blvd, east elevation, camera facing west, November 7, 2024.

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:**

Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1960, Sacramento County Assessor

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**

Bowlero Corporation  
7313 Bell Creek Rd  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

**\*P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, address)

Gregg Lukenbill  
Firefighters Burn Institute  
1081 38th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95816

**\*P9. Date Recorded:** November 7, 2024

**\*P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive

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

State of California – The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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

Page 2 of 12

\*NRHP Status Code 3S

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

**B1. Historic Name:** Land Park Bowl

**B2. Common Name:** 5850 Freeport Blvd; AMF Land Park Lanes

**B3. Original Use:** commercial B4. Present Use: commercial

**\*B5. Architectural Style:**

**\*B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alteration, and date of alterations) Original construction, 1960

Interior remodel, 1992

Freestanding Sign replaced, 1999

Interior restroom remodel and parking lot repaved, 2004

Snack bar area inside remodeled, 2013

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

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

B9. Architect: None b. Builder: Winston Steel Works, Inc.

**\*B10. Significance: Theme** Commercial Development/Recreation/Architecture **Area** South Land Park

**Period of Significance** 1960 - 1974 **Property Type** Bowling Alley **Applicable Criteria** A/1/a.i & C/3/a.iii-v  
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

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

\*B12. References:

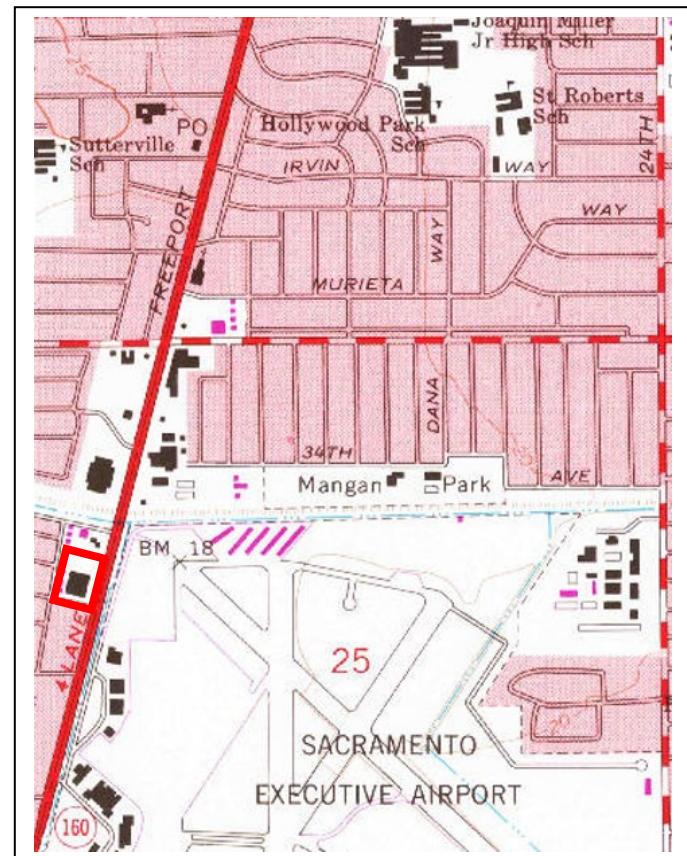
(See Footnotes)

B13. Remarks:

**\*B14. Evaluator:** Kara Brunzell

**\*Date of Evaluation:** November 7, 2024

(This space reserved for official comments.)



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

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

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 3 of 12

\*Recorded by Kara Brunzell

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

\*Date: November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update

\*P3a. Description: (continued):



Photograph 2: 5850 Freeport Blvd, north elevation, camera facing south, November 7, 2024.



Photograph 3: 5850 Freeport Blvd, west elevation, camera facing northeast, November 7, 2024.

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

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

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 4 of 12

\*Recorded by Kara Brunzell

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

\*Date: November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update



Photograph 4: 5850 Freeport Blvd main entrance, east elevation, camera facing southwest, November 7, 2024.



Photograph 5: View up Freeport Blvd looking towards 35<sup>th</sup> Ave, camera facing north, November 7, 2024.

**Page 5 of 12**

**\*Recorded by** Kara Brunzell

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**\*Date:** November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update

**B10. Significance (continued):**

Sacramento

The Nisenan, a branch of the Maidu people, occupied the area near the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers before the arrival of Europeans. The Spanish explored but did not settle in the region, and the first permanent non-native resident was Swiss immigrant John Sutter, who arrived in 1839. Sutter's Fort (approximately ¾ mile northeast of the Richmond Grove neighborhood) became a waystation for immigrants traveling overland to California in the 1840s. When Sutter's employees discovered gold near the end of the decade, Sam Brannan and other speculators laid out Sacramento near Sutter's Fort. A dry winter in 1848 – 49 allowed Sacramento's founders to ignore the great drawback of the site: its position in the floodplain. Surveyors platted an enormous three-mile area, giving the east-west streets letter names and numbering the north-south streets (see Figure 18). Sacramento became the gateway to California's gold fields. Its influence was made enduring in 1854, when Sacramento became the permanent state capital. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 further established Sacramento as a hub for commerce as the importance of gold mining waned in the region. As the nineteenth century progressed, agriculture began to overtake mineral extraction as the most important economic pursuit in the Sacramento Valley.<sup>1</sup>

As Sacramento matured from a frontier tent encampment to a permanent city, it became clear that flooding would be a recurring problem. Beginning in 1862, Sacramento undertook a series of flood control projects that were considerably more ambitious than initial attempts to build levees. Civic leaders raised the streets just east of the Sacramento River and re-channeled the mouth of the American River. A flood in 1878 prompted the creation of the first comprehensive flood control plan for the Sacramento Valley in 1880. The first structure of note in the southern part of Sacramento was the R Street levee, initially constructed from Front Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street to protect downtown from floods. The R Street levee acted as a de facto barrier to the development of the southern portion of city limits.<sup>2</sup>

Early Sacramento development was concentrated near the waterfront. The State Capitol on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the rail yards to the northwest stimulated West End development during the late nineteenth century. Commercial activity was concentrated at the western end of K Street and near the rail yards. Establishment of streetcar service allowed residential development to push eastward along the streetcar lines beginning in the 1870s. As Sacramento's population grew around the turn of the century, K Street was transformed into a commercial corridor and residences were pushed out. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, development densified the West End with multi-story retail, office, hotel, and apartment buildings replacing many smaller nineteenth century. Sacramento's population growth was further stimulated as new levees lessened flood danger and streetcars were electrified; by 1910, the City had nearly 45,000 residents.<sup>3</sup>

After the turn of the century, the entire southern part of the Sacramento street grid was opened to development when the City demolished the R Street levee in response to advocacy from the Southside Improvement Club. In 1911, annexation of areas east and south of the original grid added 6,000 acres of land and further boosted population. Growth slowed during World War I, but by the 1920s a booming economy was fueling rapid development and population expansion in Sacramento. The built environment was reshaped with the addition of institutional buildings like lodges, churches, Memorial Auditorium, and a new hospital as well as substantial downtown commercial development. Commercial expansion fueled population growth, which necessitated new residential neighborhoods as well as schools and a junior college. The onset of the Great Depression in 1930 halted most construction and began an era of hardship for Sacramento. The railyards and canneries, major local employers, laid off workers in considerable numbers. Population growth, however, continued, along with continued development of educational buildings in the 1930s.<sup>4</sup>

The entry of the US into World War II in 1941 prompted the establishment or reactivation of three military installations in Sacramento County: Mather Field, McClellan Supply Depot, and Sacramento Signal Depot. The bases, located outside city limits, stimulated suburban

<sup>1</sup> "Sacramento Bird's Eye View," The Daily Record-Union and Weekly Union, 1890s; Sacramento Daily Union, 6 October 1881, 3 col.1; Sanborn Insurance Maps, Sacramento, California, 1895; Steven M. Avella, *Sacramento, Indomitable City* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 31-32, 41, 49, 58.

<sup>2</sup> Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, *Sacramento Area Flood History*, SAFCA, 2008, <http://www.safca.org/history.html>, accessed 6 February 2014; Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center and the Historic Old Sacramento Foundation, *Sacramento's Midtown* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 71.

<sup>3</sup> Environmental Science Associates, "Historical Resource Impact Analysis Report, Sacramento Entertainment and Sports Complex," prepared by JRP Historical Consulting, October 2013, 13.

<sup>4</sup> William Burg, *Midtown, Sacramento: The Creative Soul of a City* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014); *The Sacramento Bee*, October 25, 1944, 6; Steven M. Avella, *Sacramento, Indomitable City* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 80, 90-92.

**Page 6 of 12**

**\*Recorded by** Kara Brunzell

**\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)** Land Park Bowl

**\*Date:** November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update

commercial and residential development and drew new residents to the area. Development also signaled a shift from an economy based on agriculture and the railroad to one in which military bases and state government offices were the biggest local employers. The local Japanese population suffered disruption and loss of property during the war as a result of the US government decision to incarcerate them in camps far from the West Coast. As California's population exploded during and after World War II, state government grew with the transition to a full-time legislature, and the City of Sacramento expanded far outside its original boundaries into former agricultural areas. Between 1946 and 1955, 27 annexations added ten square miles to Sacramento's urban footprint. The shift toward the personal automobile in the post-war period facilitated this trend, making commutes feasible beyond the area that had been urbanized during the nineteenth century; by 1960, the population of Sacramento's suburbs had surpassed that within city limits. Completion of the Elvas Freeway (Business 80) in 1955, US 50/99 in 1961, and Interstates 5 and 80 in the late 1960s further encouraged development in Sacramento County's rural areas. The 1960s and 1970s saw more substantial annexations, after which growth slowed but did not stop.<sup>5</sup>

Redevelopment beginning in the 1950s led to the destruction of much of Sacramento's original urban fabric, including the West End and historic Japantown. Meanwhile, continued suburban development and the intrusion of freeways into historic neighborhoods led to disinvestment and population loss in much of the area within the original city limits. The 1980s brought the decline of Sacramento's most significant, long-standing industries: the railyards, canneries, and military bases. The loss of these industries was only partially offset by growth in the technology sector and the ongoing employment provided by state government. Today, Sacramento's population is over 490,000 and the city occupies around 98 square miles.<sup>6</sup>

#### South Land Park

South Land Park is a neighborhood in south Sacramento roughly bounded by Interstate 5, Florin Avenue, Freeport Boulevard, and Centerville Road. The area was part of John Sutter's New Helvetia land grant, and, along with Land Park to its north, gets its name from William Land, a former Mayor of Sacramento who purchased the land in 1911. At the turn of the twentieth century, small-scale residential development began near the corner of Sutterville Road and Freeport Boulevard. After World War II, many of the mid-century modern homes in the neighborhood were developed by Joseph Eichler, a real estate developer and proponent of affordable nondiscriminatory housing. Eichler worked with Moss & Moss developers to construct the residential subdivisions and became well-known for the design quality of his houses. The area was annexed by the City of Sacramento in the 1950s, when Freeport Boulevard was being intensively developed as a commercial corridor to serve new houses nearby. By 1955, South Land Park had 9,000 residents. The suburban neighborhood saw additional growth when Interstates 5 and 80 were completed in the 1970s. In 2024, the city of Sacramento designated 48 houses built by Eichler near the southeast corner of the neighborhood as the South Land Park Hills Historic District for their historical significance.<sup>7</sup>

#### Bowling

Many versions of bowling games have developed independently worldwide since ancient times. The American sport of bowling originated in Germany as a game called ninepins, which had been brought to the US along with English and Dutch versions by the early 1800s. In the US, a tenth pin was added to the game for unknown reasons. Bowling grew in popularity and bowling lanes were built in the mid-nineteenth century in cities with large German populations such as Chicago and New York. Early bowling balls were made of hardwood, and rubber bowling balls were introduced in 1905. In 1914, the bowling ball transitioned to the rubber compound Mineralite, as promoted by the Brunswick Corporation, which was used through the 1960s. Bowling was one of the first sports to include women; there are records of women bowling as early as the late-nineteenth century. In 1916, the Women's International Bowling Congress was established; the sport would eventually include children as well and become a popular family activity.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> City of Sacramento, General Plan Technical Background Report, Prepared by Ascent Environmental, August 2014, 81-82, 94, 113; County of Sacramento, County History, 2018, accessed 28 November 2018, <http://www.saccounty.net/Government/Pages/CountyHistory.aspx>; Norwood, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> "Visitors: Demographics," City of Sacramento, 2013 – 2017, accessed 13 June 2018, <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Visitors/Demographics>.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Geological Survey, 1902; Land Park Community Association, "Sacramento Park Neighborhoods: Land Park," Jul. 2020, 75; City of Sacramento, Mid-Century Modern Historic Context Statement and Survey Results, prepared by GEI consultants, Mead & Hunt, September 2017, 2-36; City of Sacramento Mayor's Office of Community Engagement, "Sacramento Historic District Recognizes Mid-Century Homes by Developer Joseph Eichler," May 21, 2024.

<sup>8</sup> International Bowling Museum, "History of Bowling," Accessed Nov. 5, 2024, <https://www.bowlingmuseum.com/Visit/Education/History-of-Bowling>; United States Bowling Congress, "History of Bowling," Accessed Nov. 5, 2024, <https://bowl.com/about-us/history-of-bowling>.

**Page 7 of 12**

**\*Recorded by** Kara Brunzell

**\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)** Land Park Bowl

**\*Date:** November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update

In Sacramento, bowling alleys were erected alongside billiard rooms, saloons, and dance halls during the 1850s. A bowling alley in the basement of the Morse Building in Old Sacramento was a typical example. As Sacramento grew, new bowling alleys were constructed in recreation halls and social clubs, and even a few large private homes. Male domination of bowling and its association with establishments that served alcohol persisted well into the twentieth century. When the sale and consumption of alcohol was outlawed in the 1920s, bowling alleys were separated from bars, and the sport began to take on more wholesome associations. Although women's bowling associations and tournaments were on the rise in the 1910s, the sport was opened to large numbers of women and children during the Prohibition era, as purpose-built alcohol-free bowling facilities developed. Repeal of Prohibition allowed the introduction of drinking into the new bowling alleys in which the sport was the primary activity, further increasing its popularity. At least three Sacramento bowling alleys featuring eye-catching signage, meeting rooms, and Streamline Moderne architecture were developed between 1939 and 1942.<sup>9</sup>

In the early 1940s, approximately 12 million people participated in bowling nationwide. Following World War II, many bowling centers were constructed in Sacramento and across the US. By this time, rules and alley specifications had been standardized. These modern bowling alleys were also accompanied by amenities like restaurants and lounges to accommodate families and socializing. By 1948, there were approximately 20 million bowlers in the United States. The early postwar era was a golden age for bowling, as alleys proliferated alongside suburban expansion. By 1958, the American Society of Planning Officials considered US bowling centers "one of the most important – if not the most important – local center of participant sport and recreation," which was attractive to men, women, and children. The planning society attributed the success of bowling to its relatively low cost, the attractive amenities of postwar bowling facilities, and their suburban locations, which had helped bowling become "socially acceptable." By 1959, 400,000 children were members of the Junior Congress bowling organization. However, growth was slowed in the 1950s and 1960s, due to the overproduction of bowling centers and the increase in the value of land, and many bowling alleys were redeveloped or stripped of decorative features in the 1970s. Bowling became a corporate pursuit, and many bowling alleys were remodeled to be more uniform. Today, approximately 67 million people of all ages bowl in the US.<sup>10</sup>

With rapid suburbanization and annexation of former agricultural lands after World War II, Sacramento experienced a strong postwar bowling alley boom. At least eight new facilities were constructed in and around San Francisco between 1948 and 1960; the subject property was one of three bowling alleys developed in 1960. In 1962, The Sacramento Suburban Directory boasted of 10 bowling alleys in the area including six "huge bowling and recreational centers." All 10 Sacramento-area bowling alleys were still open in 1989; in 2024 the subject property is the last purpose-built bowling alley within Sacramento city limits.<sup>11</sup>

#### Winston Steel Works

Winston Steel Works, Inc. of Sacramento was founded by James Winston in 1946. The company had plants in Sacramento, Stockton, and San Francisco, where they prefabricated steel warehouses and commercial buildings. Winston Steel Works constructed many commercial and industrial buildings in Sacramento and Northern California, including its own Sacramento headquarters at 4700 West Capitol Avenue. They would use cranes to assemble steel structures with concrete foundations and concrete slab walls poured on site. Born in Hungary, James Winston (1897-1974) immigrated to the United States in 1904 and received his master's degree in engineering at Cooper Union College in New York in 1926. Winston was a pioneer in pre-fabricated reinforced concrete and steel construction. Winston also worked as a draftsman, design engineer, contracting engineer, industrial engineer, and chief engineer. He was also very involved in the community, a member of the Society of American Military Engineers, the California Society of Professional Engineers, the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, the California Farm Bureau, and other local organizations. At the time the company was founded, it was the only producer of prefabricated steel buildings in Sacramento. His wife, Ellenore Winston (1888-1987), was the vice president of Winston Steel

<sup>9</sup> United States Bowling Congress, "History of Bowling," Accessed Nov. 5, 2024, <https://bowl.com/about-us/history-of-bowling>; Bowlero Corporation, Historic Resources Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento, Sacramento County, California, Prepared by Lisa "LC" Demarais, M.H.P., and Dan Herrick, M.H.C., Principal Investigator, Garret Root, M.A., October 2024, 12 – 13.

<sup>10</sup> Sandra Shannon, "Post WWII Commercial Recreation, 1940-1975," Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, Sep. 2017, 1-5; Bowling Musuem, "History of Bowling," Accessed Nov. 5, 2024; American Society of Planning Officials, Report 110, May 1958; Bowlero Corporation, Historic Resources Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento, Sacramento County, California, Prepared by Lisa "LC" Demarais, M.H.P., and Dan Herrick, M.H.C., Principal Investigator, Garret Root, M.A., October 2024, 13 – 15.

<sup>11</sup> Bowlero Corporation, Historic Resources Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento, Sacramento County, California, Prepared by Lisa "LC" Demarais, M.H.P., and Dan Herrick, M.H.C., Principal Investigator, Garret Root, M.A., October 2024, 14; The Sacramento Suburban Directory, 1962, VII; Dorothy Leland, Big Tomato Guide to Sac Region, 1989, 33.

**Page 8 of 12**

**\*Recorded by** Kara Brunzell

**\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)** Land Park Bowl

**\*Date:** November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update

Works. The couple had two daughters. In 1964, the company went bankrupt and closed. James Winston died in 1974 after working in engineering for many decades.<sup>12</sup>

Notable Projects:

- Winston Steel Works plant, Sacramento, 1951
- Highway maintenance station, Auburn, 1954
- Buildings at two uranium mills, Argentina, 1954
- Palm Market, Auburn, 1957
- Hi Land Market, Sacramento, 1959
- Storage building for General Mills, Lodi, 1961
- Bowling alley, Nevada City, 1961

#### 5850 Freeport Blvd

The Bowling Alley at 5850 Freeport Boulevard was built in 1960 by the Winston Steel Works, Inc. of Sacramento, which also designed the 26,000 square-foot building. Previously, the property was owned by Walter and Tom Sullivan and was purchased by Toki and Gonzo Sakai in 1958. The building was originally Land Park Bowl, owned by the Sakais and operated by David, Dale, and Earl Warren. The structure of the building was pre-engineered by Winston Steel Works, and the bowling alley's plans accounted for 32 lanes, a restaurant, a cocktail lounge with seating for 95 people, and even a nursery and children's play yard. The "cluster"-type automatic return system was the first of its kind in the area. Its suburban location featured ample free parking. According to its designer, its 148-foot-wide clear span roof was the largest of its type in Northern California at the time. Gonzo Sakai (1888-1962) was a native of Japan and lived in Clarksburg for many years with his wife, Toki Sakai (1894 – 1963). The couple operated a ranch on which they raised six children, all born in California. The family was apparently able to reclaim their property after being incarcerated by the US government at Tule Lake during World War II. The bowling alley project seems to have been their only foray into real estate development. The Sakais were active in the local community, donating cherry trees to a public park and participating in the Buddhist temple community.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1960s and 1970s, the bowling alley hosted events for various age and affinity groups including bowling classes. Special rates were offered to children for daytime bowling, and there was a bowling club specifically for seniors. Land Park Bowl was used for charity fundraisers and local clubs like the Lions met at its restaurant. On weekends, live bands and go go dancers entertained evening bowlers, and on Monday nights it was the meeting place for a 21-and-over singles club.<sup>14</sup>

In the 1960s, the bowling alley experienced two robberies and two fires, leading to some interior remodeling. However, the footprint of the building has remained unchanged since 1964. By the late 1960s it was known as Brunswick Land Park Bowl. In 1974, the Sakai family sold old Land Park Bowl to the Brunswick Corporation of Illinois (the company that historically led the change of bowling balls from rubber to Mineralite). In 1987, the property was sold to American Recreation Centers, Inc. of Sacramento. At the time, the American Recreation Centers company owned 27 bowling alleys. The name of the bowling alley was eventually changed to AMF Land Park Lanes. The AMF Land Park bowling alley continued in use with few alterations until its recent closure in 2024.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> United States Federal Census, "James Winston," New Jersey, 1930; *Sacramento Union*, "Producer of Prefab Buildings Launches \$500,000 Expansion," Jul. 29, 1951, 7; *Press-Tribune*, "congratulations Dry Mix Products Co," Mar. 16, 1954, 13; *Sacramento Bee*, "James Winston," Jan. 10, 1974, 35; *Sacramento Bee*, "US Bankruptcy Public Auction," Aug. 12, 1964, 65.

<sup>13</sup> *Sacramento Union*, "Freeport Blvd. Land Sells for \$92,500," Apr. 20, 1958, 23; *Sacramento Union*, "Ground Broken For New Bowl," Jan. 17, 1960, 35; *Sacramento Bee*, "Sakai," Apr. 24, 1962, 25; US Census Records, Clarksburg, California, 1940.

<sup>14</sup> *Sacramento Bee*, "Bachelors & Bachelorettes," October 8, 1970, 57.

<sup>15</sup> *Sacramento Bee*, "Masked Trio Ties Up Land Park Bowl Manager, 7 Others, Flees with \$637," Feb. 24, 1961, 32; *Sacramento Bee*, "Crime in the Alleys, Fire Set By Asked Pair Damages Bowling Spot in City," Oct. 17, 1966 1; *Sacramento Bee*, "Youth, 17, Is Facing 2 Charges," Jun. 17, 1966, 32; *Sacramento Bee*, "Land Park Bowl Arson Is Probed," Aug. 8, 1968, 64; *Sacramento Bee*, "Land Park Bowl is Purchased," Sep. 8, 1974, 46; *Sacramento Bee*, "Public Notice," Sep. 5, 1987, 78.

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

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

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 9 of 12

\*Recorded by Kara Brunzell

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

\*Date: November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update



Figure 1: Owner Gonzo Sakai, Rev. Senshow Sakai and the Warren brothers breaking ground, 1960 (*Sacramento Union*).

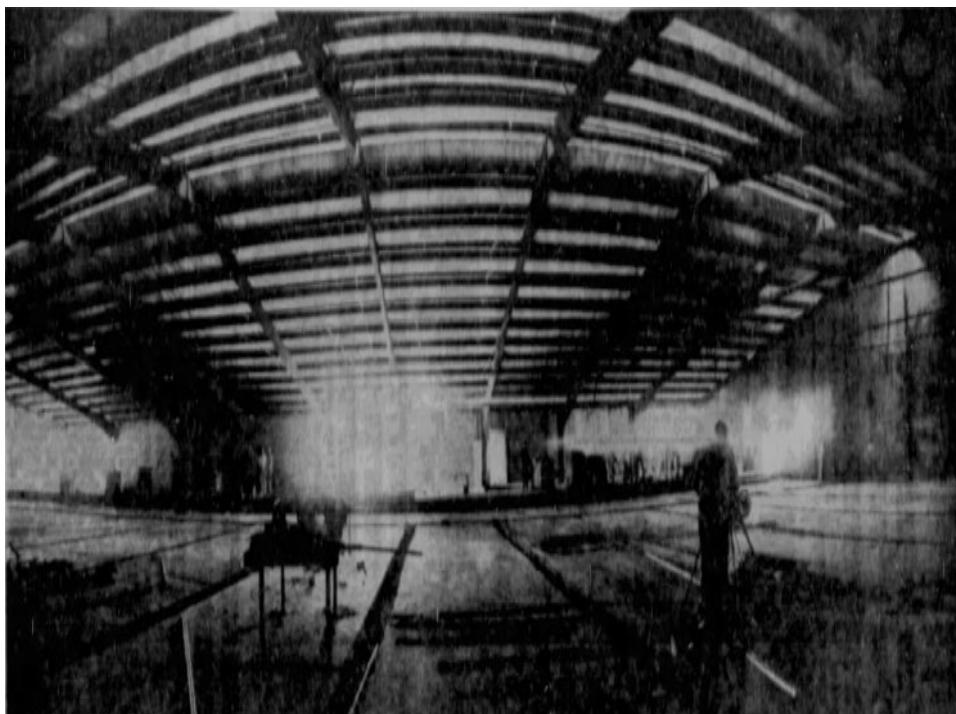


Figure 2: Land Park Bowl under construction, 1960 (*Sacramento Bee*).

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

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

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

Page 10 of 12

\*Recorded by Kara Brunzell

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

\*Date: November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update



Figure 3: Land Park Bowl coffee shop, 1960 (*Sacramento Bee*).

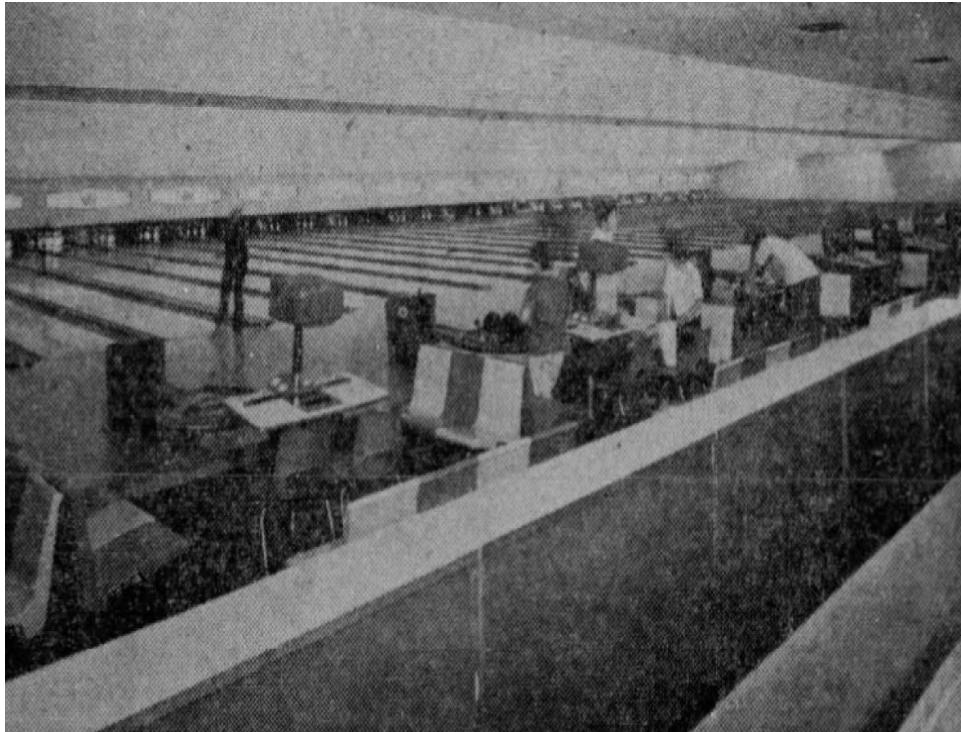


Figure 4: Land Park Bowl interior, 1960 (*Sacramento Bee*).

Page 11 of 12

\*Recorded by Kara Brunzell

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Land Park Bowl

\*Date: November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update



Figure 5: Land Park Bowl at 5850 Freeport Blvd, 1960 (*Sacramento Bee*).

**Evaluation:**

The NRHP, CRHR, and Sacramento require that a significance criterion from A-D, 1-4, or a.1-a.vi (respectively) be met for a resource to be eligible.

Criterion A/1/a.i: The bowling alley property at 5850 Freeport Boulevard is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The property is associated with the commercial development of the South Land Park area of Sacramento in the mid-twentieth century and with the transformation of Freeport Boulevard into a commercial corridor. It is also associated with the expanding postwar popularity of bowling as a sport played by women and children as well as men. It exemplifies the postwar rise of the suburban bowling center in Sacramento, a purpose-built bowling facility in which the sport was the primary activity. Constructed outside the traditional urban core, these facilities included amenities such as restaurants, meeting rooms, nurseries, free parking, and cocktail lounges. Land Park Bowl was particularly important as a gender-neutral recreational center for people of all ages since the newly-developed neighborhood lacked a downtown area with a high density of traditional quasi-public recreational spaces like social clubs, lodges, neighborhood bars, and restaurants. Therefore, the property is recommended eligible to the NRHP, CRHR, and Sacramento register under Criterion A/1/a.i.

Criterion B/2: The commercial property at 5850 Freeport Boulevard is not associated with the life of persons important to our history. Research has revealed no important professional accomplishments or impacts on local history by individuals associated with the property, and the property type has limited potential for significant association with important persons. Therefore, the property lacks the association required for eligibility under Criterion B/2. The property is recommended not eligible to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion B/2.

Criterion C/3/a.ii-v: The property is significant for its architecture. Land Park Bowl was designed and constructed by a well-known local company, Winston Steel Works. The steel-span roof structure was believed at the time of its construction to be the largest in Northern California. Moreover, Winston Steel Works was Sacramento's only prefabricated steel producer at the time. It is an excellent example of a Mid-Century Modern bowling alley, many of which have been demolished or redeveloped in Sacramento, making them increasingly rare. Its dramatic folded plate roof form, concrete construction, geometric shapes (main entrance awning), and eye-catching space-age entrance

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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

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

**Page 12 of 12**

**\*Recorded by** Kara Brunzell

**\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)** Land Park Bowl

**\*Date:** November 7, 2024  Continuation  Update

sculpture designed to attract the attention of passing motorists are characteristic of the Googie commercial architectural style as described in the Sacramento Mid-Century Modern Historic Context Statement. For these reasons, the property is individually eligible to the NRHP, CRHR, and local register under Criterion C/3/a.ii-v.

Criterion D/4/a.vi: In rare instances, buildings themselves can serve as sources of important information about historic construction materials or technologies and be significant under Criterion D/4. 5850 Freeport Boulevard is an example of well-understood types of construction and does not appear to be a principal source of important information in this regard.

Historic integrity is defined as the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during its historic period. There are seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Loss of integrity, if sufficiently great, overwhelms significance, rendering a property ineligible for historic listing. Land Park Bowl has not been moved and therefore retains integrity of location. The composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure, and style of the building have not been significantly altered. Although the loss of original signage has somewhat degraded integrity of design, other significant features of its original design have been retained and therefore the property retains the ability to convey its original design significance. The building's integrity of materials and workmanship is evident in the survival of original exterior details such as its dramatic folded plate roof, concrete construction, and Googie-style entrance details with geometric triangular steel sculpture. The property retains sufficient significant physical characteristics from its original construction to convey its historic qualities and therefore retains integrity of feeling. Recent use as a bowling alley and the presence of the physical features that convey its original architectural characteristics allow it to convey integrity of association. Therefore, the building conveys its historic significance through all seven aspects of integrity.

The property is recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP, CRHR, and Sacramento register under criteria A/1/a.i and C/3/a.ii-v.



# Historic Resources Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento, Sacramento County, California

OCTOBER 2024

PREPARED FOR  
**Bowlero Corporation**

PREPARED BY  
**SWCA Environmental Consultants**

**HISTORIC RESOURCES EVALUATION OF  
5850 FREEPORT BOULEVARD (AMF LAND PARK LANES),  
SACRAMENTO, SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Prepared for

**Bowlero Corporation**  
7313 Bell Creek Rd  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111  
Attn: Steve Moroneso

Prepared by

Lisa "LC" Demarais, M.H.P., and Dan Herrick, M.H.C.

Principal Investigator

Garret Root, M.A.

**SWCA Environmental Consultants**  
100 Howe Avenue, Suite 230N  
Sacramento, California 95825  
(916) 427-0703  
[www.swca.com](http://www.swca.com)

SWCA Project No. 93135

SWCA Cultural Resources Report No. 24-791

October 2024

## **MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

**Purpose and Scope:** In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and pursuant to request by the City of Sacramento (City), Bowlero Corporation (Bowlero) retained SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) to conduct a historic resources evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes located at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California (subject property). The purpose of the current study was to determine whether AMF Land Park Lanes qualifies as a historical resource, as defined by CEQA, and to assist the City in consideration of the proposed demolition of the subject building.

To evaluate AMF Land Park Lanes, SWCA conducted property research, completed an architectural field survey, documented the subject property and its existing conditions, developed relevant historic contexts, and assessed the potential historical significance of the property to determine potential eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register), per each inventory programs criteria. This Historic Resources Evaluation Report provides the results of the study.

**Findings:** After careful consideration of the history, design, and historical associations of the subject property, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes ***not eligible*** for listing in the CRHR or Sacramento Register due to a lack of historical significance under any CRHR and Sacramento Register Criteria. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes does not qualify as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA compliance.

## CONTENTS

<b>Management Summary .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Qualifications of Personnel .....	1
Location and Setting.....	1
Methodology .....	4
Literature Review.....	4
Archival Research.....	4
Field Survey.....	4
<b>Regulatory Framework .....</b>	<b>4</b>
California Environmental Quality Act .....	4
California Register of Historical Resources .....	5
Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources .....	6
<b>Historic Context .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Development of the City of Sacramento .....	6
Nineteenth Century .....	6
Twentieth Century .....	9
Bowling and Bowling Alleys in Sacramento .....	11
Mid-Century Modern Architecture.....	15
<b>Evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes.....</b>	<b>17</b>
Property History .....	17
Existing Conditions .....	20
Observed Alterations.....	23
Evaluation Considerations.....	23
Evaluation of Eligibility .....	25
Criteria 1/I.....	25
Criteria 2/II .....	25
Criteria 3/III, IV, and V .....	25
Criteria 4/VI.....	26
Eligibility Recommendation Summary.....	26
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>References Cited.....</b>	<b>28</b>

## Appendices

Appendix A. Department of Parks and Recreation 523 Forms

## Figures

Figure 1. Project vicinity map.....	2
Figure 2. Project location map.....	3
Figure 3. Surveyor's map of the city of Sacramento, California, 1874 (J. R. Ray). Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum. ....	8
Figure 4. Early bowling alley in Sacramento, 1915 (International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame 2024).....	12
Figure 5. Advertisement for the Capitol Bowl, 1939 ( <i>The Sacramento Union</i> ). ....	13
Figure 6. Image of Alhambra Bowl from a 1942 flyer (Sacramento Public Library).....	13
Figure 7. Fireside Lanes, 1960 (Pope Studios). Courtesy of the Sacramento Public Library.....	14
Figure 8. Advertisement for the opening of Country Club Lanes ( <i>The Sacramento Union</i> 1960).....	15
Figure 9. Loan/Chase Bank Building, 2017 (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017).....	17
Figure 10. Interior view of Land Park Lanes under construction ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960a:17).....	18
Figure 11. Part of the Land Park Bowl grand opening advertisement, showing an exterior rendering of Land Park Bowl ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960b:23). ....	19
Figure 12. Bowling lanes at Land Park Bowl ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960:23). ....	20
Figure 13. Coffee shop at Land Park Bowl ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960:23). ....	20
Figure 14. Land Park Bowl, 1960 ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960:A17). ....	20
Figure 15. East (primary) façade; view facing west. ....	21
Figure 16. South façade; view facing north. ....	22
Figure 17. West (left) and south (right) façades; view facing northeast.....	22
Figure 18. North façade; view facing south. ....	23

## INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) was retained by Bowlero Corporation (Bowlero) to conduct a historic resources evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes located at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California (subject property) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and at the request of the City of Sacramento (City). Bowlero is seeking approval from the City to demolish AMF Land Park Lanes, which is a 1960 post-war bowling alley building located in the South Land Park neighborhood of Sacramento. This evaluation considers whether AMF Land Park Lanes is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register). The purpose of this study is to determine whether AMF Land Park Lanes is a historical resource, as defined by CEQA.

This study, including preparation of this Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER), was completed in compliance with the requirements established by CEQA and was guided by National Park Service (NPS) Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (NPS 1995), California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources and Guidelines for the Archaeological Research Designs* (OHP 1995, 1991), and Chapter 17 of the City Code.

This section of the report introduces the preparer's qualifications and the study's scope, purpose, location, setting, and methodology. A summary of the regulatory framework for the study, including the evaluation criteria, follows. Next is a review of the historic context relevant to evaluating AMF Land Park Lanes, as well as an assessment of the subject property. Conclusions are provided, followed by bibliographic references. The subject property was documented on California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Forms, which have been appended to this report (Appendix A).

## Qualifications of Personnel

This evaluation was performed by and under the direction of architectural historians who meet and exceed the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Professional Qualification Standards (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 61) for Architectural History and History. SWCA Architectural Historian Lisa Demarais, M.H.P., oversaw the field survey effort, served as project manager, and was the primary author of this report. SWCA Senior Architectural Historian Dan Herrick, M.H.C., contributed to this report as an author and provided oversight and review of all project activities and deliverables.

## Location and Setting

AMF Land Park Lanes is located on Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 035-0034-016 at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The property is bounded by developed commercial parcels to the north, 38th Avenue to the south, Freeport Boulevard to the east, and McLaren Avenue Freeport Boulevard Alley to the west. The surrounding setting consists of dense, low-rise, mixed-use development. The subject property setting includes low-density commercial properties to the north and south along Freeport Boulevard, a civil airport (Sacramento Executive Airport) to the east, and single-family residential development to the west, northwest, and southwest.

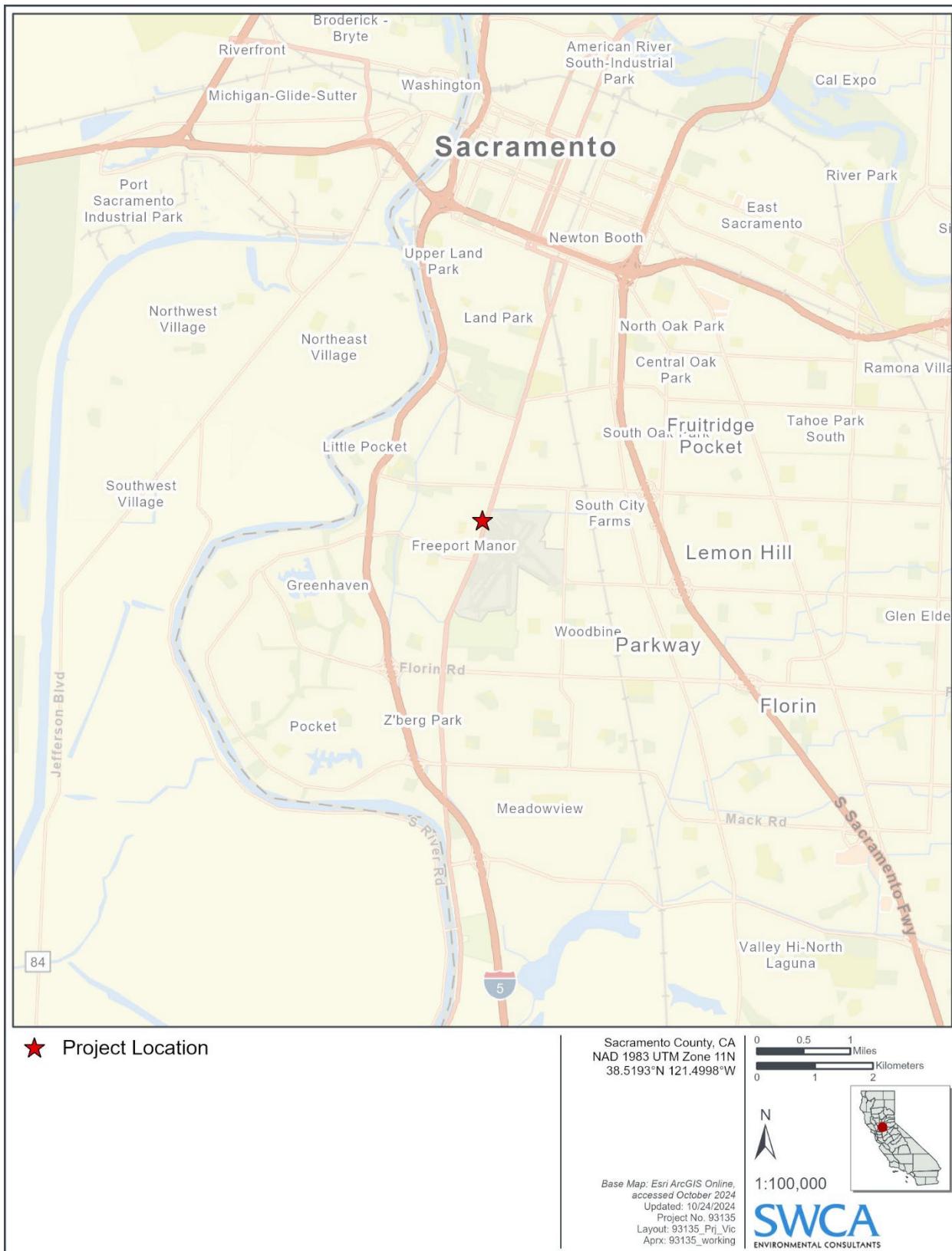


Figure 1. Project vicinity map.



Figure 2. Project location map.

## Methodology

This section outlines the research and field documentation approaches undertaken by SWCA to evaluate AMF Land Park Lanes.

### Literature Review

AMF Land Park Lanes has not been the subject of a previous cultural resources investigation. SWCA performed a review of previous investigations relevant to the history of the subject property to compile historical context and registration requirements for the eligibility assessment. Specifically, SWCA relied upon the following documents:

- “Sacramento City-Wide Historic Context and Standards & Criteria” in *Sacramento Historic District Plans – Final* (Page and Turnbull 2019)
- *Mid-Century Modern in the City of Sacramento Historic Context Statement and Survey Results* (GEI Consultants, Inc. [GEI] and Mead & Hunt, Inc. [Mead & Hunt] 2017)
- “Post WWII Recreation, 1940-1975” in *Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement* (Shannon 2017)

### Archival Research

In addition to the literature review, SWCA conducted archival research to determine whether the property is associated with any historically important persons or events and to establish a developmental history of the property. Repositories and sources included the Sacramento County Assessor, Online Archive of California, California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives, Calisphere, Sacramento Public Library, HistoricAerials.com, Newspapers.com, and Ancestry.com, among other online resources.

### Field Survey

SWCA conducted an intensive-level built environment field survey of AMF Land Park Lanes on October 22, 2024, to document the existing conditions and key characteristics of the property using digital photography. The field survey was conducted under the direction of SWCA Project Architectural / Project Manager Historian Lisa Demarais, M.H.P.

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This regulatory framework section identifies the laws, statutes, guidelines, and regulations that govern the identification, evaluation, and treatment of cultural resources.

### California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires a lead agency to analyze whether historic resources may be adversely impacted by a proposed project. Under CEQA, a “project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment” (California Public Resources Code [PRC] 21084.1). Answering this question is a two-part process: first, the determination must be made as to whether the proposed project involves historic resources; second, if historic resources are present, the proposed project must be analyzed for a potential substantial adverse change in the significance or integrity of the resource.

According to State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5, for the purposes of CEQA, historic resources are:

1. A resource listed in, or formally determined eligible for listing in, the CRHR (PRC 5024.1; 14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] 4850 et seq.);
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC 5020.1(k) or identified as significance in a historic resources survey meeting the requirements of PRC 5024.1(g); and
3. Any building, structure, object, site, or district that the lead agency determines eligible for national, state, or local landmark listing; generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be historically significant (and therefore a historic resource under CEQA) if the resource meets the criteria for listing in the CRHR (as defined in PRC 5024.1; 14 CCR 4852).

According to CEQA, the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined eligible for listing in the CRHR or is not included in a local register or survey shall not preclude the lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource (PRC 5024.1). Pursuant to CEQA, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource may have a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5(b)).

## California Register of Historical Resources

Created in 1992 and implemented in 1998, the CRHR is “an authoritative guide in California to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change” (PRC 21083.2 and 21084.1). Certain properties, including those listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and higher, are automatically included in the CRHR. Other properties recognized under the California Points of Historical Interest program, identified as significant in historical resources surveys or designated by local landmarks programs, may be nominated for inclusion in the CRHR. According to PRC Section 5024.1(c), a resource, either an individual property or a contributor to a historic district, may be listed in the CRHR if the State Historical Resources Commission determines that it meets one or more of the following criteria, which are modeled on NRHP criteria:

- **Criterion 1:** It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- **Criterion 2:** It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- **Criterion 3:** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- **Criterion 4:** It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Resources nominated to the CRHR must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to convey the reasons for their significance, known as integrity. Aspects of integrity assessed when determining potential eligibility include location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources

The Sacramento Register was created through Title 17 of the City Code, which outlines the City's historic preservation regulations. Criteria for listing on the Sacramento Register is similar to that of the NRHP and CRHR, though it includes cultural resources that may not reach the level of significance needed for listing in the national or state registers. Cultural resources listed in the Sacramento Register are considered landmarks and are listed based on the findings of the City Council. The requirements for listing are as follows:

- I. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state, or the nation;
- II. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in the city's past;
- III. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;
- IV. It represents the work of an important creative individual or master;
- V. It possesses high artistic values; or
- VI. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the city, the region, the state or the nation;

The nominated resource must also have integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The following sections examine historical themes relevant in considering the potential historical significance of AMF Land Park Lanes. The historic context is divided by significance theme, and each theme is discussed chronologically.

### Development of the City of Sacramento

#### *Nineteenth Century*

Before European colonization, Nisenan and Plains Miwok called the Sacramento area home. Spanish colonization, which primarily occurred along the southern and central coast of California, did not instantly affect the Indigenous populations of the interior of California. The first recorded European expedition into the interior of California occurred in 1808 by Gabriel Moraga. Moraga surveyed the region to find suitable locations for a future mission and named the Sacramento Valley and Sacramento River, after the Spanish word for sacrament. Throughout the next two decades, various travelers entered the Sacramento Valley, but no permanent non-Indigenous settlements were established until 1839.

In 1839 John Sutter, along with a few Hawaiian and European settlers, established the first non-Indigenous permanent settlement—a fort called New Helvetia. The land was granted by the Mexican government, which controlled California at the time after having gained independence from Spain in 1822. Sutter raised horses and cattle and farmed grain and corn. He also built a sawmill at present-day Coloma in El Dorado County, which would lead to the first discovery of gold in California in 1848 (Page & Turnbull 2019:19–20). The resulting Gold Rush spurred massive westward American migration and settlement of California, greatly influencing the broader history of the state and the United States. Thousands of migrants poured into California during the Gold Rush, greatly accelerating its development

(California Department of Conservation 2005; Rice et al. 1994:169). The Gold Rush was a major factor in California's transformation from a sparsely populated western frontier to a center of industry, commerce, and trade. One year after the discovery at Sutter's Mill, nearly 90,000 people had migrated to California in search of gold. As the gateway to the Sierra Nevada and the goldfields of the foothills, Sacramento quickly became a transportation hub and nexus of Gold Rush economic activity (Page & Turnbull 2019:19-20; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

Also in 1848, and shortly after the discovery of gold in California, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and made California a territory of the United States (National Archives 2023). On January 4, 1850, California's first constitutional convention convened, establishing the first 18 counties. Over the succeeding months, additional counties were added, bringing the total to 27 on the day of California's admission to the United States on September 9, 1850. Sacramento County was one of those original counties, with the City of Sacramento its county seat. The City would become the capital of California in 1854, in large part due to the Gold Rush, which had caused massive population growth in the area and established its role as a center of commerce (California State Association of Counties 2019; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

While the primary draw to California in the late 1840s and early 1850s was the insatiable dream of striking it rich in the gold fields, many found the search for gold much more difficult than expected. Many of the people who migrated to the California gold fields, originally from agrarian and business backgrounds, soon realized the real riches lay in establishing enterprises that profited from miners, such as agricultural pursuits (California State Association of Counties 2019). This was true in Sacramento County, which is situated in the northern Central Valley, a region known for its rich agricultural lands. Grain cultivation and grazing dominated land use in the Sacramento area until the turn of the twentieth century when new crops such as citrus fruits and almonds took prominence (Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Amidst the Gold Rush and statehood, Sacramento was under formal development and soon began to take the shape of a true city. In December 1848, John Sutter, Jr. and Sam Brannan hired topographical engineer Captain William H. Warner and Lieutenant William Sherman to survey and layout "Sacramento City." The original city grid consisted of 26 lettered (originally A to Z, today C to Broadway) and 31 numbered (originally 1st to 31st, today Front to Alhambra) streets. Sacramento's city grid was built directly at the base of the American River flood basin, where centuries of Sierra Nevada snowmelt created temporary lakes each spring, well into the 1840s. Sacramento's original townsite was a 5-square-mile area, with each street 80 feet wide (except for Front and M) and each block 320 to 340 feet long. Each block was composed of many lots, and many blocks were divided by 20-foot-wide alleys (Figure 3) (Owens 2013:32–33, 42–43; Hallam 2013:63–64).

Sacramento grew through 1850; however, the population was not stable and remained largely transient aside from the core of merchants and hotel owners. California's population was undoubtedly increasing, but the population of Sacramento grew sluggishly and inconsistently due in part to the transient nature of the early Gold Rush miners, flooding, and fires that destroyed buildings. In September 1849, a destructive fire swept through the business district, destroying several blocks of canvas tent and wood-framed structures, followed by a major flood in January 1850. In 1852 fire again swept through the business district, destroying over 55 blocks of the city. Original buildings in Sacramento were wood frame and canvas, but as fires and floods became a way of life, citizens began to erect buildings of brick and raised the street level, leaving the original street level below grade.

In 1854 Sacramento became the capital of California. This rise in prominence, coupled with the City's strategic location and early commercial importance in the development of California, resulted in Sacramento becoming the western terminus for the first transcontinental railroad, which was constructed starting in 1863 and completed in 1869. The Central Pacific Railroad Company, which later became the

Southern Pacific Railroad and then later the Union Pacific Railroad, was founded by a group of merchants and businessman known as “the Big Four,” who were based in Sacramento, or had strong ties to the region. This development solidified Sacramento as a center for transportation in California, providing immediate links to San Francisco and the growing agricultural hinterlands of the central valleys with the rest of the United States (Owens 2013:48–50; Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Through the 1870s and into the 1900s, growth continued eastward away from the original core along the river embankment (or *embarcadero*) and K Street. The patterns of growth were often reflective of the types of amenities in given neighborhoods, including schools and parks. John Sutter Jr., the primary driving force for the development of Sacramento, had the City laid in a grid pattern with spaces specifically for city plazas. These plaza parks provided residents with publicly accessible spaces within an urban core. In the 1870s, several state government buildings were built in Sacramento, including the extant Capitol Building and the adjacent landscaped park. As growth continued, pushed by the development of streetcars, which connected new neighborhoods with the urban commercial core, the main city grid began to fill. Homes were built in a variety of popular styles such as Greek Revival and Italianate. By the 1890s, speculators had begun to eye land outside of the main grid for development. This led to development of Sacramento’s first residential suburban tracts of Oak Park, Elmhurst, Curtis Park, and East Sacramento (Kremer 2012; Page & Turnbull 2019:21, 27).

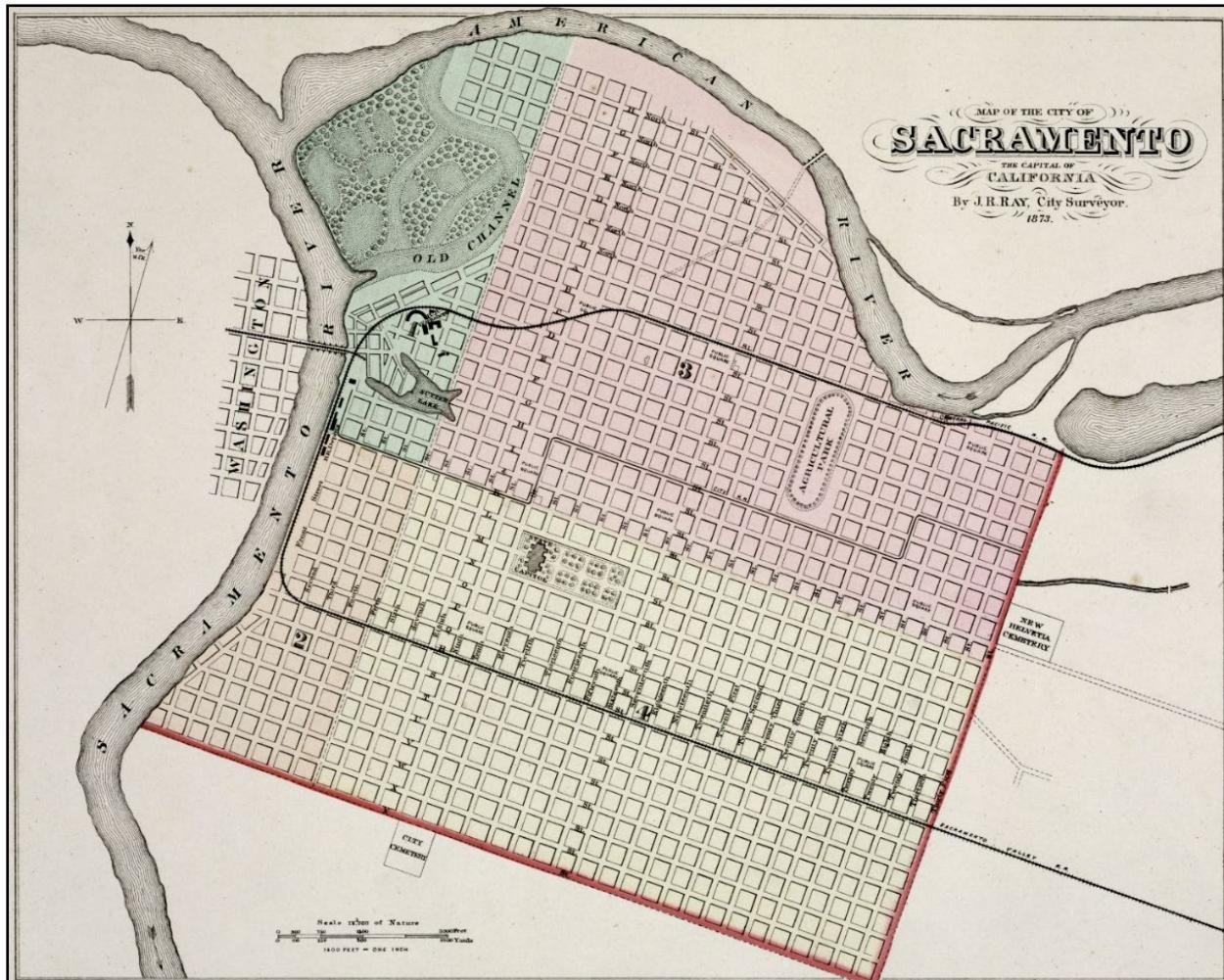


Figure 3. Surveyor's map of the city of Sacramento, California, 1874 (J. R. Ray). Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum.

## **Twentieth Century**

Sacramento continued to grow during the early to mid-twentieth century with increased residential, commercial, government, infrastructure, and transportation development. The early twentieth century was marked by steady growth and early suburbanization, while Sacramento's development during the post-war period largely followed national trends of continued post-war suburbanization, expansion of the automobile, and late-twentieth century urban renewal, which sought to bring people back to cities that were broadly viewed negatively. Many Americans at the time saw cities as centers of disease and crime. Urban renewal, or urban revitalization, was undertaken across the United States during the 1950s to 1980s (Williams 2013:v, 23–25; Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

In the early twentieth century, residential expansion grew outward from downtown Sacramento to the fringes of the original city limits. These new homes were built in a myriad of newly popular architectural styles such as Prairie and Craftsman styles. Affluent homes were typically built on east–west-aligned streets, while moderately sized homes were constructed on the numbered streets. Ancillary buildings such as stables and cottages for laborers were constructed facing alleys. Several new neighborhoods like Boulevard Park, Winn Park, Newton Booth, and Bungalow Row emerged during this time, largely along streetcar lines. In addition to streetcars, in the early twentieth century, Sacramento developed four electric interurban railroads for passenger service. The service had more frequent railroad stops and were faster than the streetcars. Streetcar service ended in 1947, but some passenger rail service continues. Many new civic buildings were built in downtown Sacramento in the early twentieth century. This new civic construction largely adhered to popular styles at the time, notably Neoclassical Revival and Beaux-Arts Revival. This type of development briefly slowed during the Great Depression but was renewed during and post-World War II. Several military facilities were constructed at McClellan Field, Mather Field, and the Sacramento Army Depot while new state buildings were constructed surrounding Capitol Park (Page & Turnbull 2019:26, 32–33). Pre-war commercial development was largely within downtown and midtown (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-16).

Sacramento underwent many changes in the mid-twentieth century as a direct result of World War II and expansion of the automobile. The economy shifted from primarily agriculture to military, federal and state government, and transportation industries. Alongside the national population, Sacramento saw significant population growth of its own, with an increase from 105,958 in 1940 to 137,572 in 1950. This growing population was also more mobile than ever before, spurring expansion of development outside of Sacramento's downtown core. The growing post-war population spurred a housing shortage and rapid construction of new homes. New post-war residences were most frequently built in Minimal Traditional and Mid-Century Modern styles outside of the core city and in suburban areas (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-4). In 1947 planning for a new freeway system began, marking the beginning of a shift to automobile travel instead of streetcar and rail service. By 1961, the South Sacramento, Elvas, and Capital City Freeways were complete. The city core connected to these routes via surface streets. By 1954, planning for an east–west-oriented freeway was underway (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-13–2-14).

World War II also had a profound effect on the Japanese-American population; more than 7,000 Japanese-American Sacramento residents were forcibly relocated to internment camps during the war, and of those, only 59% returned to the city after the war. During this time, the government instituted the Bracero Program to fill job vacancies left by the removal of Japanese-American citizens with temporary Mexican labor. The program resulted in a shift in the ethnic makeup of Sacramento's labor force (Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

With the increasing availability and affordability of automobiles in the post-war era, most new residents, drawn to Sacramento for its available jobs, began life in the suburbs. For these same reasons, in the

1950s, state government buildings began to be dispersed throughout the city and post-war commercial development was largely focused on areas outside of downtown Sacramento, specifically in areas south, east, and northeast of downtown (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; Page & Turnbull 2019:22, 26–28). New commercial development was focused on independent business alongside major thoroughfares outside of downtown and through or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Some major retailers also left downtown, such as Sears, which moved to a new suburban location in 1956. The City convinced Macy's to construct a new downtown store, which was completed in 1963, but this did not have the desired effect of inspiring new downtown commercial development (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2–19).

Like the automobile and World War II, urban renewal had a profound impact across Sacramento during the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1950s, the City began efforts of urban renewal, starting with the West End, Sacramento's skid row, through the newly created Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA). Subsequent plans undertaken in the 1960s to 1970s also involved redeveloping the Capitol Mall, Alkali Flat, and Oak Park areas. The roots of urban renewal date to the 1940s. At the federal level, the Housing Act of 1949 provided federal subsidies for local redevelopment projects and gave local agencies the power to acquire parcels through eminent domain for redevelopment, and the Housing Act of 1954 coined the term urban renewal. At the state level, urban renewal dates to the 1945 Community Development Act. The movement was a reaction to the economic decline in cities across the country as commercial and residential development largely moved to the suburbs. Cities at the time were broadly viewed negatively. Sacramento's West End was seen as a center of vice, disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency. Ultimately, urban renewal resulted in mass demolition of buildings that displaced thousands of residents and businesses in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-7–2-8; Page & Turnbull 2019:28, 30; Williams 2013:25). Despite the renewal efforts, the suburban model for development with sprawling expansions of residential neighborhoods, strip malls, and shopping centers would continue to define Sacramento and the surrounding region during the twentieth century, as evident in present-day development patterns.

## **SOUTH LAND PARK**

The project area lies within South Land Park, which was annexed in the 1950s and today is bounded by Sutterville Road to the north, Florin Avenue to the south, Freeport Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the west. The area is known for its “rolling hills, mature native oak trees, and curving streets” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-35). The Land Park area, including South Land Park, was named for William Land, Sacramento's mayor from 1898 to 1899, who made his fortune with hotels in downtown Sacramento. Before it was Land Park, the area was part of New Helvetia, an 11-square-league Mexican land grant given to John Sutter in 1841 by then-governor Juan B. Alvarado (Isidro 2005:7–13, 18; Hoffman 1862). Development during this period was largely north of Sutterville Road in the town of Sutterville, within present-day Land Park but north of South Land Park. Early sketches show Sutterville as a burgeoning community as early as 1846 and include a brickyard, carpenter, blacksmith, and several saloons by 1847. Sutterville Brewery was built on the south side of Sutterville Road for Robert H. Vance in 1853, within the northernmost part of South Land Park. The brewery was demolished in 1853 and was known as Sutterville's last remaining building (Whittle 2009; Isidro 2005:9). By 1885, the entire Sutter land grant had been divided into many tracts ranging from 10 to over 1,000 acres and sold to many different property owners (Shepherd 1885).

The first homes in South Land Park were built as early as 1902, at the southwest corner of present-day Sutterville Road and Freeport Boulevard, and several more homes were built by 1907 (U.S. Geological Survey 1902, 1907). The Mead Family, which built residences during this time, is largely attributed to developing the area. In the 1940s, after the economic downturn of the Great Depression, developers began larger-scale projects in South Land Park, though there was a pause during World War II. Since the 1940s, hundreds of homes have been constructed in South Land Park, and Freeport Boulevard has become a busy

shopping district. The South Land Park Hills Historic District alone features 49 residences built by developer Joseph Eichler from 1955 to 1956, known for his non-discriminatory housing policies during segregation. By the early 1970s, construction of Interstates 5 and 80 was complete, providing better access to South Land Park and further solidifying the importance of the automobile and suburbanization in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-14, 2-35–2-36; *Sacramento City Express* 2024). Today, the neighborhood continues to retain its suburban qualities with post-war single-family residences and commercial corridors dotted with low-density shopping centers and strip malls.

## Bowling and Bowling Alleys in Sacramento

The game of bowling, and its variations of target bowling (bocce, lawn bowls, etc.) and pin bowling, have ancient and widespread roots with early variations having been practiced in Egypt in the sixth century, Polynesia, and elsewhere. Modern bowling in the United States, however, evolved from traditions brought over by European immigrants and settlers, primarily from Germany and other parts of northern Europe. The earliest portrayal of the game in the United States was in Washington Irving's 1819 book *Rip Van Winkle*, which depicted characters playing an early variation of the game known as ninepins. Over the following decades, bowling became increasingly popular, resulting in the construction of indoor lanes in New York and other cities with large German populations, including Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and others (United States Bowling Conference 2024).

With the discovery of gold in California at Sutter's Mill on the American River in 1848, the ensuing Gold Rush lured thousands of people from all over the world, including the eastern United States, as well as western Europe. Throughout the mining camps and emerging towns and centers, drinking and gambling were often the most ubiquitous forms of entertainment and recreation with saloons and gambling halls being constructed from the ports of San Francisco up into the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada, earning early California an overall reputation for "moral laxity" (Khoury 2012). Gambling games varied, ranging from cards to bullfights, boxing and races, to bowling and billiards. Bowling was particularly popular during the Gold Rush with many saloons and gambling halls constructing adjoining bowling alleys as an added amenity for patrons. In an 1851 letter written by Dame Shirley (Shirley and Russell 1922), the wife of a mining camp doctor, to her sister, she wrote:

The rolling on the bowling alley never leaves off for ten consecutive minutes at any time during the entire twenty-four hours. It is a favorite amusement of the mines; and the only difference that Sunday makes is that it never leaves off for one minute.

As the launching point into the gold fields and mining camps of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 1850s Sacramento featured several saloons, billiard rooms, gambling halls, and bowling alleys. One of the earliest advertised bowling alleys was the Central Bowling Alley, located at No.51 J Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets, which boasted four 70-foot lanes that were constructed "in the most substantial manner" and a bar "supplied with the most choice liquors of all kinds, and the finest flavored cigars . . ." (*Daily California Statesman* 1855; *The Sacramento Bee* 1857). Many other bowling alleys were located throughout the central portion of the city, located in adjoining buildings or within the basements of saloons, which often featured billiards, shooting galleries, dance halls, and stages for live music. One such place was called "The New Corner," which was in the basement of the Morse Building, which is still standing in Old Sacramento at 1025-1031 2nd Street (*The Sacramento Bee* 1866). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the game also had popularity outside of the saloons and gambling halls as a simple form of recreation, with alleys constructed in upper class social clubs, as well as the construction of lanes by the Sacramento Athletic Club and the Sacramento Young Men's Christian Association as a form of recreation alongside gymnastics, fitness, and other forms of sport alongside intellectual and spiritual pursuits (*The Sacramento Union* 1887). Wealthy individuals also constructed their own personal bowling alleys within their grand mansions and estates within Sacramento and the surrounding area. One of the

most notable was that of Adolph Heilbron, a German cattle rancher and landowner, who constructed his grand Italianate mansion at 704 O Street; the still extant residence was listed on the NRHP in 1976 (*The Sacramento Bee* 1892; Price 1975). Despite this proliferation of bowling as a more popular form of recreation, the majority of alleys and lanes continued to be in the setting of saloons, bars, and German-owned beer gardens well into the early twentieth century (*The Sacramento Bee* 1896; Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:187).



**Figure 4. Early bowling alley in Sacramento, 1915 (International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame 2024).**

As Sacramento expanded with the development of early streetcar suburbs in the early twentieth century, so did new recreation halls. In Oak Park and East Sacramento, new bowling alleys were developed as the sport continued to proliferate within popular culture. New bowling leagues were founded and tournaments were held at locations such as the Sequoia Bowling Alley on 909 K Street, drawing in teams from around the Sacramento area to regularly compete for a variety of prizes (*The Sacramento Star* 1910). Emerging as its own sport, local bowling scores were often increasingly published in local papers under the sports section. While the sport had previously been exclusive to men, women and youth bowlers became increasingly common during the 1920s and the sport was marketed to a broader, albeit Caucasian, demographic with new leagues, tournaments, and other events (*The Sacramento Union* 1931; Shannon 2017:3).

Bowling had been long associated with drinking establishments and the sale of alcohol; however, the enactment of prohibition in 1920 quickly changed the game. Many of the alleys associated with taverns and saloons were closed, while some bowling alley owners reorganized their business model to focus on the sport itself, decoupling from associations with alcohol and creating a more family-friendly pastime (Riess 2015:187). During this period, the common naming conventions of bowling alleys changed, often substituting the words like bowl or lane instead of alley. Rules and standards of the game and the distinctly American 10-pin variant were more codified and regulated by organizations like the American Bowling Congress, and new dry purpose-built bowling alleys were constructed throughout the United

States, bringing the sport into the mainstream (Riess 2015:187; Shannon 2017:1–3). Despite the proliferation of bowling into popular culture as part of prohibition, a more widespread expansion of bowling alleys did not occur until its repeal, allowing for drinking to again become part of the bowling pastime, establishing it as a major outlet for socializing and recreation in communities, particularly for young men (Riess 2015:188). Unlike the bowling alleys before, large new bowling facilities with multiple lanes were constructed under the new specifications of the sport with bowling as the primary activity and not an added amenity as a barroom game. Just before World War II, there were an estimated 12 million bowlers in the United States, and the sport continued to grow in popularity steadily over the 1930s through World War II (Shannon 2017:1-4).

Many of these new post-Prohibition “bowling palaces” were constructed in Sacramento during the 1930s and early 1940s, including Capitol Bowl at 1415 L Street (1939), North Bowl at 1721 Del Paso Boulevard (1941), and Alhambra Bowl at 1229 Alhambra Boulevard (1942) (*The Sacramento Union* 1939, 1941; *The Sacramento Bee* 1942a). These facilities were composed in a Streamlined or Moderne style (Figure 5 and Figure 6) architecture with prominent marquee, and often featured a dozen or so lanes, air conditioning, restaurant corners, cocktail lounges, league meeting rooms, locker rooms, spectator seating areas, and occasionally billiard rooms (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942a).



**Figure 5. Advertisement for the Capitol Bowl, 1939 (*The Sacramento Union*).**



**Figure 6. Image of Alhambra Bowl from a 1942 flyer (Sacramento Public Library).**

During World War II, bowling alleys in Sacramento remained open although construction of new alleys stalled. An exception was on military bases in the area, where bowling lanes were installed as a form of recreation for the servicemen (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942b). Approximately 4,500 bowling lanes were constructed on military bases across the United States during World War II and more women's leagues were established amongst civilians. It was not until the post-war period that the expansion of bowling as a sport reached a new level of popularity outside of military bases. The 1950s and 1960s are often considered the golden age of bowling with new purpose-built bowling facilities constructed throughout the rapidly expanding post-war landscape of American cities and towns (Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:188). Bowling was an important aspect of recreation in post-war America, with an estimated 20 million bowlers across the country in 1948. A one-lane bowling alley was even installed in the White House by President Truman in 1947. Many of these post-war bowling alleys had restaurants, meeting or banquet rooms, and lounges that served as places to socialize or gather local clubs, groups, and organizations. Most often, they were constructed in Mid-Century Modern architectural styles, with the Googie style being most notable, and eye-catching signage, such as the one at Fireside Lanes in Sacramento (Figure 7), was a key design element (Shannon 2017:1, 4, 20-22; Pope Studios 1960).



Figure 7. Fireside Lanes, 1960 (Pope Studios). Courtesy of the Sacramento Public Library.

Sacramento was no exception with new modern and larger bowling alleys constructed throughout the expanding reaches of the city's growing suburbs in the post-war era. New bowling alleys included Sacramento Bowl located at 917 6th Street (1948), Town and Country Bowl on Fulton Avenue (1956) South Bowl at 5005 Stockton Boulevard (1958), El Rancho Bowl at 900 West Capitol Avenue in West Sacramento (1959), Country Club Lanes at 2600 Watt Avenue (1960), Cordova Lanes in Rancho Cordova (1960), Fireside Lanes (1960) at 7901 Auburn Boulevard (see Figure 7), and Land Park Bowl at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (1960) (*The Sacramento Union* 1956, 1958, 1959, 1960a; Pope Studios 1960).

By the 1950s, bowling was solidified as an American pastime suitable for families, a stark difference from its early association with gambling. New facilities, typically composed in some variation of the Mid-Century Modern style, also featured significantly more lanes, new technologies, and amenities. Bowling centers with 40 to 60 lanes became most common in the United States, and new technologies such as air conditioning, automatic pin setters, and underground ball returns became widespread. In Sacramento, smaller 20- to 40-lane bowling alleys were most common. Like bowling alley exteriors, interiors were also often lavishly designed with colorful carpets, murals, and other decorative details. These types of bowling alleys were built rapidly across the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, and substantial building costs over one million dollars were not uncommon. Bowling center amenities continued to expand. Cocktail lounges and meeting rooms were still common, but instructional programs, live musical performances, coffee shops, concessions, childcare facilities, and pro-equipment shops also became common offerings. Many bowling alleys of this era were also open 24 hours a day to further attract diverse clientele. Some bowling alleys even offered laundry and grocery shopping services to attract housewives during daytime hours. The number of children bowling also substantially increased in

the post-war era with nearly 400,000 members of the Junior Congress bowling association in 1959 (Riess 2015:188; Shannon 2017:3–5).

Because of racial segregation, the bowling centers of this era were typically restricted to white Americans and the clientele was largely suburban, though with the encouragement of the National Bowling Association, some bowling alleys provided specific times for people of color to bowl. More often, older outdated bowling alleys were purchased specifically for use by persons of color (Shannon 2017:5). Of the bowling alleys constructed in Sacramento during this period, one of the most notable was the El Rancho Bowl (now Capitol Bowl), which is believed to be the first racially integrated bowling alleys in the region, allowing for patrons of any race to partake and form leagues at the facility (Saizan 2014). Another notable bowling alley was Country Club Lanes, which was the largest and most celebrated of these facilities during this period. In addition to the wide array of amenities, the building featured iconic Mid-Century Modern architecture with some Googie-inspired elements with its broad parabolic entrance canopies (Figure 8; *The Sacramento Union* 1960a).



Figure 8. Advertisement for the opening of Country Club Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1960a).

By the 1970s, with increased forms of recreation and entertainment available to the public, the popularity of bowling started to wane. Bowling leagues became less popular and many bowling establishments were forced to close. As women entered the workforce in greater numbers, daytime customers became fewer. Many bowling alleys were demolished during this period as land values increased. This trend would continue in part throughout the remainder of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. As part of this, many of the larger bowling centers built additional amenities to attract patrons, such as arcades. The character-defining features of many early bowling alleys were removed as they were purchased and updated in the 1970s and 1980s (Shannon 2017:5–6). New bowling alleys constructed at this later date were often within the setting of larger gaming facilities or bars, such as Punch Bowl Social in downtown Sacramento, offering only a few lanes as a single amenity and novelty rather than the primary form of recreation.

## Mid-Century Modern Architecture

As discussed in the previous section, bowling alleys of the post-war era, like AMF Land Park Lanes, were typically built in Mid-Century Modern styles. Modernism emerged as a popular architectural style and aesthetic philosophy throughout the United States during the early-to-mid twentieth century, reaching its

heyday in the post-World War II era. Modernism was greatly influenced by industrialization during and after World War II, which made new building materials such as glass and steel more common and affordable. Modernism markedly diverged from past architectural styles with its function over ornamentation ethos. Several Modernist-style offshoots developed during the twentieth century, including Googie, International, and Late Moderne (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1–3-10). Though many of these styles had key differences, they typically shared the following features:

**Form** – overall geometric massing and simple, clean lines; emphasis on horizontality, though not with unrelieved flat planes; in multi-story structures, interior floors are often demarcated on the exterior with an inset first floor and cantilevered planes to indicate upper floors.

**Structure** – exposed structural system typically using concrete, steel, or wood materials, and some concrete block or masonry for smaller structures.

**Roof** – flat or low-pitches, often with deep overhangs/eaves emphasizing horizontality; some with large sweeping or folded forms.

**Exterior and interior walls** – contrasting materials and textures or smooth, blank walls typically filling entire structural “bays”; exterior walls and openings in offset planes along horizontal lines; use of exterior screens or grills that shelter window and door openings, usually in concrete or metal.

**Windows** – custom windows (ribbon, picture, corner); large expanses of glass arranged in horizontal groupings of vertically oriented sashes, with glazing often filling entire structural bays; windows may be located in clerestory, between solid walls and eaves.

**Integrated site planning and landscapes designs** – sliding glass doors, integrated indoor and outdoor private living spaces, courtyards with screens, walls, berms, or plantings that provide demarcation between private and public outdoor spaces; plantings generally have a horizontal orientation relative to sun angles and topography (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-5–3-6).

During the war, material rations and a moratorium on housing construction in the United States stagnated the construction of Modernist architecture. After the war, with these limitations removed, the economy in a period of prosperity, and the population expanding, there was a construction boom that favored Modern design principles and features. Modernist architecture of the post-war era is referred to under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modernism. A variety of property types were newly constructed in the Mid-Century Modern style in the post-war era, including residential, institutional, commercial, and educational buildings (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1–3-6, 3-9–3-10). Common features of these buildings included “cantilevered roofs, flat or shed roof forms, deep overhanging eaves, canted and large expansive windows, and a variety of incorporated materials, including wood, stone, brick, stucco, plastic, metal, and concrete” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-9–3-10). Styles under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modern architecture included Modern Ranch, Contemporary, Commercial Modern, Brutalism, and more (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-10–3-15).

During the 1950s to 1970s, Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture was often influenced by the earlier International style. On the opposite end of the spectrum, many commercial buildings in the 1950s and 1960s, were built in the striking Googie (or Exaggerated Modern) style. While the International style, and Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture influenced by the style, was defined by crisp clean lines, flat roofs, horizontality, and limited ornamentation, the Googie style was dramatic and striking. Common features of Googie-style architecture included exaggerated non-linear rooflines, irregular

massing and asymmetrical façades, colorful accents, prominent signage, neon lights, and starburst motifs (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-8–3-9, 3-12). Key commercial corridors in Sacramento include Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Freeport Boulevard, Broadway, Del Paso Boulevard, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and Capitol Avenue. Examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture, such as the Loan/Chase Bank (4701 Freeport Boulevard) (Figure 9) and Gunther’s Ice Cream (2801 Franklin Boulevard), can be found within these areas (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:1-6, 2-13). The South Land Park Hills (Eichler) Historic District is composed of 49 Mid-Century Modern homes (*Sacramento City Press* 2024).



**Figure 9. Loan/Chase Bank Building, 2017 (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017).**

## **EVALUATION OF AMF LAND PARK LANES**

This section catalogues the efforts of SWCA to assess AMF Land Park Lanes and includes a discussion of the subject property's developmental history, a property description, photographs of the property, and the evaluation of eligibility under CRHR and Sacramento Register criteria.

### **Property History**

AMF Land Park Lanes was constructed in 1960. A review of historical aerial photographs of the subject property from 1964 through 2022 shows the footprint of the building has remain unchanged during that period (National Environmental Title Research 2024; Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). The

bowling alley was first mentioned in available historical newspaper articles in August 1960, which depicted its interior (Figure 10) and reads:

A pre engineered, 148 foot [sic] clear span, described by James Winston of the Winston Steel Works as the widest of its type in a rigid frame building in Northern California, has been erected in Land Park Lanes. Plans call for the 32 lane [sic] bowling alley, restaurant and bar on Freeport Boulevard, opposite the Sacramento Municipal Airport, to be completed in about six weeks. Owned by the Gonzo Sakai family of Clarksburg, Yolo County, the \$600,000 development will be operated by Dave and Dale Hanna. The steel span was engineered and built by the Winston plants in Sacramento and Stockton, San Joaquin County (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).

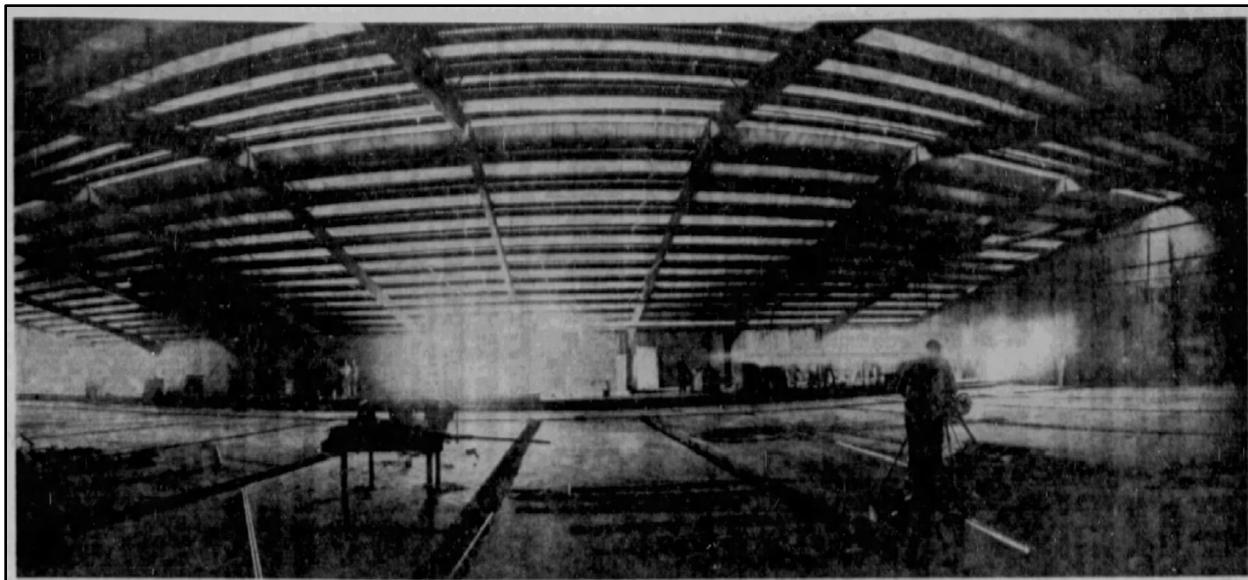


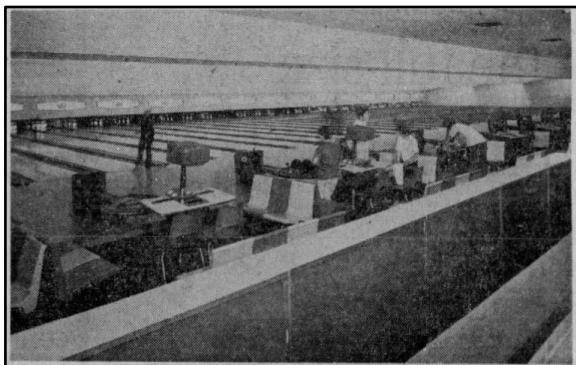
Figure 10. Interior view of Land Park Lanes under construction (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).

Winston Steel Works, named after owner James Winston and founded in 1946, was a local producer of pre-fabricated steel warehouse and commercial buildings, with plants in Sacramento and Stockton. Winston had decades of experience as a designer, draftsman, engineer, estimator, and contractor and was a member of the Society of American Military Engineers, California Society of Professional Engineers, and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. The builder used cranes to assemble poured concrete slabs and welded pre-engineered steel elements to construct its buildings—a common technique that Winston Steel Works used to construct buildings throughout Sacramento and that was likely also used to erect AMF Land Park Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7). Winston Steel Works produced many pre-fabricated buildings in the Sacramento area and throughout Northern California, as well as a few buildings farther east and abroad. Most notably, Winston Steel Works built its own plant at 4700 West Capitol Avenue in Sacramento; a highway maintenance station in the Auburn area, which included a warehouse, office, garage, fuel house, and pump house; Palm Market in Auburn; a boiler house at St. Joseph's Hospital in Stockton; an exhibit building for the Inter-Mountain Fair; Hi Land Market at Watt Avenue and I Street in North Highlands, Sacramento; a storage building for General Mills in Lodi; a metal shop at Folsom Dam; a bowling alley in Nevada City; and two buildings at two uranium mills in Argentina (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7; 1954:45, 1959:23, 1962:4, 1957:31; *Nevada County Nugget* 1961:1; *Auburn Journal* 1957:15; *Lodi News-Sentinel* 1961:21; *Stockton Evening and Sunday Record* 1955:8). The company filed bankruptcy in 1964 and appears to have closed at that time (*The Sacramento Bee* 1964:65).

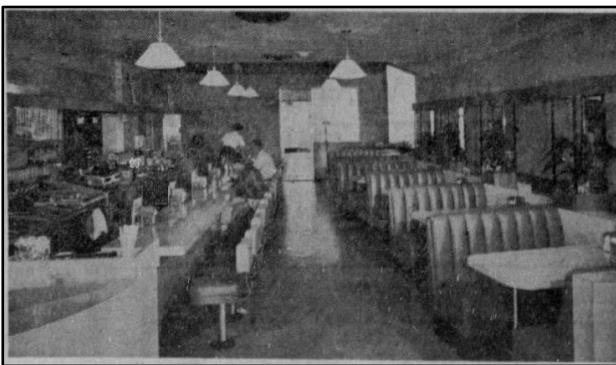
A grand opening advertisement for the bowling alley, which opened early November 1960, used the name Land Park Bowl and boasted Brunswick automatic pinsetters, subsurface ball returns, a nursery for children, a cocktail lounge, and a coffee shop featuring “excellent food” at modest prices. The bowling alley was also advertised as open 24 hours a day. Within the ad, a rendering of the building’s exterior shows its original appearance (Figure 11); several interior photographs were also included (Figure 12 and Figure 13) (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23). The earliest available photograph of the building’s exterior (Figure 14), from just before its opening, shows the original signage and indicates not all the exterior features in the rendering of the grand opening advertisement were included in the building’s final design (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17). Based on this historical photograph, several original features have been altered since 1960. The original operators of the bowling alley were David Hanna, Dale Hanna, and Earl Warren (*The Sacramento Union* 1960b:35). In the 1960s and 1970s, the facility also offered bowling classes, leagues, and events for singles and seniors (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:82, 1976:40, 1969:28; Sheppard 1973:30). In the 1960s, the bowling alley suffered several ill-fated events—two robberies and two fires—and in 1974, the bowling alley was sold to Brunswick Corporation, which had previously operated the establishment under a lease (*The Sacramento Bee* 1961:32, 1966a:1, 1966b:32, 1968:64, 1974:46). The building continued to be operated as a bowling alley until its recent closure in March 2024 due to extensive damage to the building’s interior (Walike 2024).



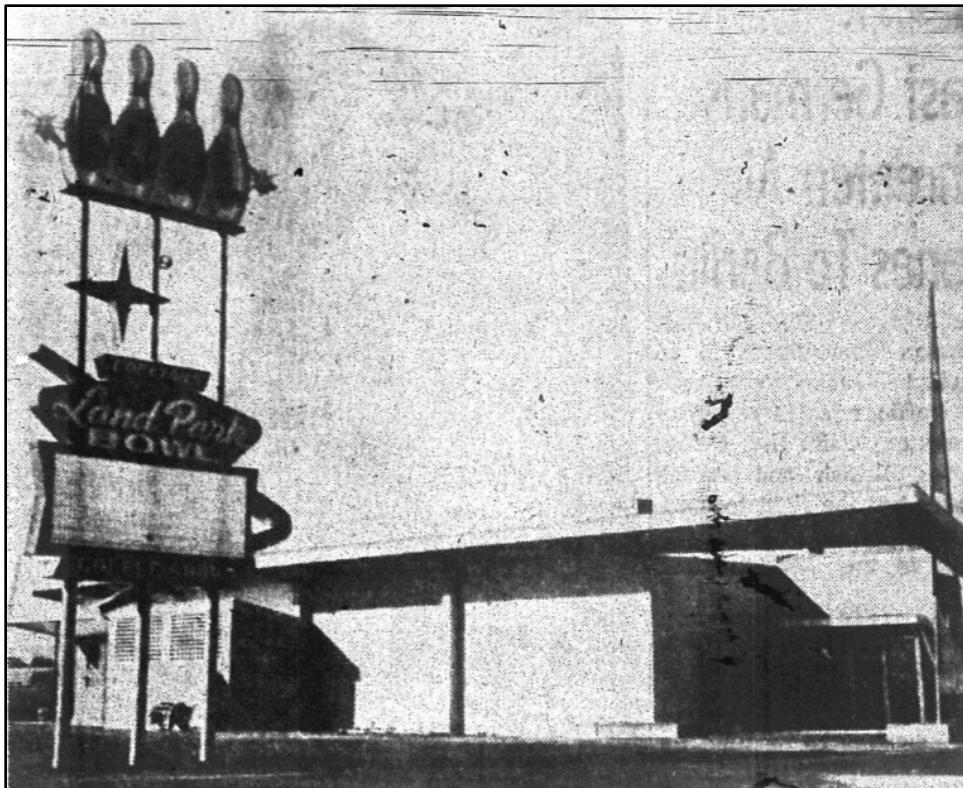
**Figure 11.** Part of the Land Park Bowl grand opening advertisement, showing an exterior rendering of Land Park Bowl (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).



**Figure 12. Bowling lanes at Land Park Bowl**  
(*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).



**Figure 13. Coffee shop at Land Park Bowl**  
(*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).



**Figure 14. Land Park Bowl, 1960** (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17).

## Existing Conditions

AMF Land Park Lanes is a single-story 28,756 square-foot Mid-Century Modern commercial/recreation building (Figure 15) with a roughly L-shaped plan within a 110,207-square-foot rectangular parcel (Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). The entire parcel surrounding the building is paved with asphalt. The building has a concrete slab foundation and is of concrete construction. The building features a low-pitch side-gable roof with a shed roof extension on the south half of the east façade, creating a subtle folded plat roof profile at select elevations (Figure 16). The overhanging eaves of the roof profile

are varied from moderate overhang to none depending on the façade (Figure 16–Figure 18). The primary (east) façade of the building is dominated by a large, L-shaped decorative awning that protrudes from the roofline and has a large cut-out opening over the building's entrance, reducing its functionality. The decorative awning has a strong linear and geometric form. There is a large, triangular steel sculpture north of the main entry doors, reminiscent of an antenna. The entrance is composed of non-historic aluminum-framed and glazed glass double doors. A secondary single-leaf door with a single-lite transom and picture window are at the southern end of the east façade. Adjacent is a protruding volume constructed of concrete masonry unit blocks with louvered venting and a shed canopy supported by steel poles. The primary façade also has Mid-Century Modern style starburst motifs and the word "BOWL," but these are painted on and not architectural ornamentation (see Figure 15). The starburst motifs and lettering were also recently added circa 2015 (Google Earth 2014, 2015). A large, freestanding non-historic sign with a changeable marquee is east of the building, within the property's parking lot. The permanent portions of the sign read "AMF Bowling Co." and "Snack Bar" (see Figure 15). A small non-historic sign reading "AMF Bowling Co." is on the north façade (see Figure 18). There are additional sets of steel and glass double doors on the north and south façades (see Figure 16 and Figure 18). Each façade also features interspaced steel pilasters.



**Figure 15. East (primary) façade; view facing west.**



**Figure 16. South façade; view facing north.**



**Figure 17. West (left) and south (right) façades; view facing northeast.**



Figure 18. North façade; view facing south.

## Observed Alterations

Based on a review of various documents and source materials related to the subject property, as well as the existing conditions observed during the site visit to the property in October 2024 and several public photographs included in the property's Google listing (Google 2024), the AMF Land Park Lanes building and surrounding property are known to have undergone several changes and alterations, including:

- Reconfiguration of the original entrance and installation of the current aluminum fenestration;
- Replacement of other doors and select windows throughout the façades;
- Replacement of the original roof with current metal seam roofing;
- Improvements to interior spaces, including partial replacement of the original ceiling with a fiberglass tile drop-ceiling, installation of newer televisions and audio systems, installation of new signage by amenities, reconfiguration of the coffee shop, and replacement of the coffee shop kiosk desk; and
- Replacement of the original "Land Park Bowl" freestanding neon sign and marquee.

## Evaluation Considerations

Although developed for the City of Los Angeles, SWCA used the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context (Shannon 2017) theme of Post-World War II Recreation (1940–1975) and its sub-theme Bowling Centers (1949–1970), in combination with Sacramento-specific development and history of bowling contexts, to guide the evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes for CRHR and Sacramento Register listing. Upon review, the eligibility standards and character-defining features for evaluating properties under these themes are largely applicable to evaluations of similar properties in other urban centers of California. SurveyLA

outlines the following areas of significance, features, and standards for evaluating post-World War II bowling alleys:

**Areas of Significance:** Post WWII bowling alleys/centers may be significant in the areas of Commerce, Recreation, and/or Architecture.

**Period of Significance:** 1949–1969

**Property Type:** Commercial/Recreation – Bowling Center

**Property Type Description:** They are large, stand-alone one-story buildings, typically surrounded by sizeable parking lots. He [sic] center typically featured eye-catching and modern architecture, design, and signage. Bowling centers typically contained bowling, dining, and drinking establishments. Modern materials including the use of steel, concrete, and glass. Modern design elements (e.g., cantilevered roof, sharp lines, sweeping angles) and futuristic or cosmic details (e.g., starbursts, boomerangs).

**Eligibility Standards:**

- Was developed during the period of significance as a neighborhood or regional bowling center.
- Present appearance resembles the original appearance and retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its historical association.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Retains most of the essential physical and character-defining features
- Played a significant role in the social and/or cultural history of the neighborhood or region
- Is an excellent example of the type
- Is also a good to excellent example of its architectural style and the work of a noted architect/designer
- Modern design elements (e.g., cantilevered roof, sharp lines, sweeping angles) and futuristic or cosmic details (e.g., starbursts, boomerangs)
- Large-scale, colorful signs, frequently in neon
- Associated architectural styles may include Googie, Mid-Century Modern, Late Moderne, and Tiki/Polynesian

**Integrity Considerations:**

- Should retain integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, and association
- Extant post-war bowling centers are now rare; therefore, a greater degree of alteration or fewer character defining features may be acceptable
- Some design features may have been modified, altered, or replaced
- Adjacent setting may have changed (Shannon 2017:21-22)

## Evaluation of Eligibility

SWCA carefully considered whether AMF Land Park Lanes possesses historical significance under any CRHR or Sacramento Register criteria and historical integrity under the seven aspects of integrity. As the eligibility criteria for both registers is analogous, eligibility is considered concurrently, below.

### **Criteria 1/I**

AMF Land Park Lanes is not significantly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history under CRHR Criterion 1 and Sacramento Register Criterion I. While the bowling alley was part of a broader trend of the growing popularity of bowling in the mid-twentieth century and the proliferation of new bowling alleys throughout the United States during that period, AMF Land Park Lanes was one of hundreds of mid-century bowling alleys built across the United States and one of many built in the Sacramento area during this period, of which more characteristic and influential examples exist. The subject property also did not have an influence on the development of bowling or patterns of development relating to bowling, which was one of the earliest forms of recreation in Sacramento and the surrounding region. Furthermore, the subject building was one of the later bowling alleys constructed in area during this post-war “Golden Age” of bowling. The property also did not have an influence on the broader development of South Land Park and, on its own, does not characterize the commercial development of this area. In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not a good representation of the themes and period it is associated with, indicating the associations do not rise to the threshold of historical significance. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under Criteria 1/I.

### **Criteria 2/II**

There is no evidence that the AMF Land Park Lanes has an important association with any person or persons who made significant contributions to history at the local, state, or national level. Research did not reveal any notable figures specifically associated with the bowling alley, and research did not indicate the potential for significant associations in this regard. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2 and Sacramento Register Criterion II.

### **Criteria 3/III, IV, and V**

Constructed in 1960, the AMF Land Park Lanes building is composed in the Mid-Century Modern style. Although the building was originally designed and rendered with many hallmarks of the style—full-height glazing entrance system, flagstone cladding, and L-shaped columns integrated into a pronounced folded plate roofline—what was constructed in the building’s original form was notably reduced in detail, creating a simpler and more commonplace characterization of the style (see Figure 14). Furthermore, AMF Land Park Lanes formerly had a distinct, lavish sign characteristic of Mid-Century Modern commercial properties and typical of post-war bowling alleys; however, this sign is no longer extant. Outside of the L-shaped decorative awning and the triangular structure at the entrance, the building currently lacks any characteristic Mid-Century Modern features. Additionally, the non-extant sign was the only notable characteristic of the original design that represented broader themes of architecture and design regarding both the Mid-Century Modern style and post-war bowling alley design. Due to the removal of this feature and other alterations found throughout the building, the current building is essentially a simple box form with simple Modern-style elements at the entrance. Overall, in its current condition, the subject property does not embody the Mid-Century Modern style, particularly within the context of South Land Park and Sacramento, which features a notable collection of Mid-Century Modern resources that better embody the style and its characteristics.

As an example of the post-war bowling alley property type, the subject property does not appear to rise to a level of significance. Although these post-war bowling alleys are becoming increasingly rare, several examples exist within the Sacramento area that better reflect the characteristics of the typology, the most notable of which is the extant Country Club Lanes building, which was the largest and most celebrated bowling alley of the period, complete with amenities and architectural details that fully embody the typology and this era in bowling alley design. By comparison, the subject building, particularly in its altered state, is a typical and lackluster example of this typology and does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria.

There is no known architect for the property; though, its simple design indicates its engineer and builder, Winston Steel Works, was likely also responsible for the design. Winston Steel Works has not had a profound influence on the history of architecture, design, or engineering; research indicates the company only ever produced pre-fabricated buildings using well-established construction and assembly techniques. The steel span roof structure was, at its time of construction, believed by Winston Steel Works to be the largest in Northern California, but it was not a new feat of engineering, as large steel span roof systems have been common in California and the United States since the post-war era. The engineering of the building was also pre-fabricated and not unique. Many such roof systems dating to the mid-century period also exist throughout Northern California, and while AMF Land Parks Lanes may have had one of the largest in Northern California for a time, this would have been a brief and/or very marginal accolade not reaching the threshold of historical significance. As such, the subject property lacks historical significance for its engineering. Similarly, the building does not appear to be a significant work of a master architect or builder.

In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not historically significant for its engineering or as the work of a master architect or builder, nor does it significantly embody the characteristics of Mid-Century Modern architecture or the post-war bowling alley property type in Sacramento. Thus, the subject property is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V.

## **Criteria 4/VI**

The history of bowling in the United States and Mid-Century Modern architecture in Sacramento are well-documented and understood topics. No other historical or pre-historic associations with the property are known to exist, and thus, the bowling alley property is unlikely to yield additional information important to prehistory or history. As such, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4 and Sacramento Register Criterion VI.

## ***Eligibility Recommendation Summary***

This eligibility evaluation finds that while AMF Land Park Lanes has some historical associations under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V with Mid-Century Modern architecture and post-war bowling alley design, the property does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria as more notable and better examples of both are found in this locality. This is exacerbated by various alterations, which have impacted the building's overall integrity and its ability to convey any potential significance under these criteria. The subject property also lacks historical significance under CRHR/Sacramento Register Criteria 1/I, 2/II, and 4/VI. Thus, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes **not eligible** for the CRHR and Sacramento Register

## **CONCLUSION**

At the request of Bowlero and the City, SWCA evaluated AMF Land Park Lanes for potential historical significance. Pursuant to CEQA, SWCA considered whether the subject property is eligible for listing in the CRHR under any criteria. Since the evaluation criteria for the Sacramento Register is analogous to that of the CRHR, this study also considered whether AMF Land Parks Lanes is eligible as a local landmark. To support the evaluation, SWCA conducted background research, completed an architectural field survey and documentation, developed a historic context statement, and established a property history. After careful consideration of the bowling alley's developmental history, design, and historical associations, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes **not eligible** for listing in the CRHR or Sacramento Register due to a lack of historical significance. Therefore, the AMF Land Park Lanes does not appear to qualify as a historical resource, as defined by CEQA.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Department of Parks and Recreation Forms**

## PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #

HRI #

Trinomial

NRHP Status Code

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

Page 1 of 30

\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) AMF Land Park Lanes

**P1. Other Identifier:** Land Park Lanes, Land Park Bowl

\***P2. Location:**  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \***a. County** Sacramento

and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

**b. USGS 7.5' Quad** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** T R Sec ; **Meridian**

**c. Address:** 5850 Freeport Boulevard City Sacramento Zip 95822

**d. UTM:** (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) See Location Map.

**e. Other Locational Data:** (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)

Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 035-0034-016

**\*P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) AMF Land Park Lanes is a single-story 28,756 square-foot Mid-Century Modern commercial/recreation building (Figure 1) with a roughly L-shaped plan within a 110,207-square-foot rectangular parcel (Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). The entire parcel surrounding the building is paved with asphalt. The building has a concrete slab foundation and is of concrete construction. The building features a low-pitch side-gable roof with a shed roof extension on the south half of the east façade, creating a subtle folded plat roof profile at select elevations (Figure 2). The overhanging eaves of the roof profile are varied from moderate overhang to none depending on the façade (Figure 2–Figure 4) (See Continuation Sheets).

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

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

**P5b. Description of Photo:** (view, date, accession #)

Figure 1. East (primary) façade, view facing west (October 2024).

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:**

Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1960

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**

Bowlero Corporation  
7313 Bell Creek Rd  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

**\*P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)

Lisa Demarais, M.H.P. and Dan Herrick, M.H.C.  
SWCA Environmental Consulting  
100 Howe Avenue, Suite 230N  
Sacramento, CA 95825

**\*P9. Date Recorded:** October 22, 2024

**\*P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive

**\*P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources or enter "none.") SWCA (2024) Historic Resources Evaluation Report for 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento,

Sacramento County, California.

**\*Attachments:**  NONE  Location 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

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) AMF Land Park Lanes

\*NRHP Status Code 6Z

Page 2 of 30

B1. Historic Name: Land Park Bowl

B2. Common Name: AMF Land Park Lanes

B3. Original Use: Recreation – Bowling B4. Present Use: Recreation – Bowling

\*B5. Architectural Style: Mid-Century Modern

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

See Continuation Sheets.

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

\*B8. Related Features: None

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Winston Steel Works

\*B10. Significance: Theme Community Development – Commercial; Recreation Area Sacramento County

Period of Significance N/A Property Type Bowling Center Applicable Criteria N/A (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural)

This eligibility evaluation finds that subject property does not possess historical significance under any established California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) criteria and is thus recommended not eligible for listing in each of these registers. The bowling has been evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (see Continuation Sheets).

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

\*B12. References: See Continuation Sheets.

B13. Remarks: None.

\*B14. Evaluator: Lisa Demarais and Dan Herrick, SWCA Environmental Consultants

\*Date of Evaluation: October 24, 2024

This space reserved for official comments.

See attached map

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 3 of 30

### P3a. Description (Continued):

The primary (east) façade of the building is dominated by a large, L-shaped decorative awning that protrudes from the roofline and has a large cut-out opening over the building's entrance, reducing its functionality. The decorative awning has a strong linear and geometric form. There is a large, triangular steel sculpture north of the main entry doors, reminiscent of an antenna. The entrance is composed of non-historic aluminum-framed and glazed glass double doors. A secondary single-leaf door with a single-lite transom and picture window are at the southern end of the east façade. Adjacent is a protruding volume constructed of concrete masonry unit blocks with louvered venting and a shed canopy supported by steel poles. The primary façade also has Mid-Century Modern style starburst motifs and the word "BOWL," but these are painted on and not architectural ornamentation (see Figure 1). The starburst motifs and lettering were also recently added circa 2015 (Google Earth 2014, 2015). A large, freestanding non-historic sign with a changeable marquee is east of the building, within the property's parking lot. The permanent portions of the sign read "AMF Bowling Co." and "Snack Bar" (see Figure 1). A small non-historic sign reading "AMF Bowling Co." is on the north façade (see Figure 4). There are additional sets of steel and glass double doors on the north and south façades (see Figure 2 and Figure 4). Each façade also features interspaced steel pilasters.



Figure 2. South façade; view facing north.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 4 of 30



Figure 3. West (left) façade and south (right) façades, view facing northeast.



Figure 4. North façade, view facing south.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 5 of 30

### \*B6. Construction History:

AMF Land Park Lanes was constructed in 1960. A review of historical aerial photographs of the subject property from 1964 through 2022 shows the footprint of the building has remain unchanged during that period (National Environmental Title Research 2024; Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). Based on a review of various documents and source materials related to the subject property, as well as the existing conditions observed during the site visit to the property in October 2024 and several public photographs included in the property's Google listing (Google 2024), the AMF Land Park Lanes building and surrounding property are known to have undergone several changes and alterations, including:

- Reconfiguration of the original entrance and installation of the current aluminum fenestration;
- Replacement of other doors and select windows throughout the façades;
- Replacement of the original roof with current metal seam roofing;
- Improvements to interior spaces, including partial replacement of the original ceiling with a fiberglass tile drop-ceiling, installation of newer televisions and audio systems, installation of new signage by amenities, reconfiguration of the coffee shop, and replacement of the coffee shop kiosk desk; and
- Replacement of the original "Land Park Bowl" freestanding neon sign and marquee.

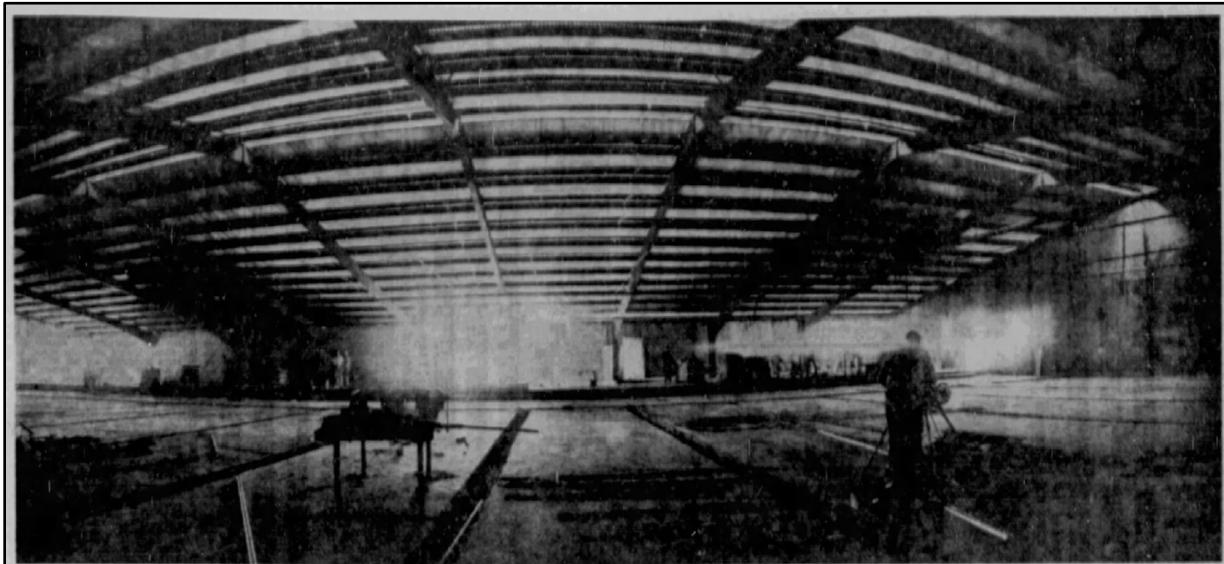
### Property History

The bowling alley was first mentioned in available historical newspaper articles in August 1960, which depicted its interior (Figure 5) and reads:

A pre engineered, 148 foot [sic] clear span, described by James Winston of the Winston Steel Works as the widest of its type in a rigid frame building in Northern California, has been erected in Land Park Lanes. Plans call for the 32 lane [sic] bowling alley, restaurant and bar on Freeport Boulevard, opposite the Sacramento Municipal Airport, to be completed in about six weeks. Owned by the Gonzo Sakai family of Clarksburg, Yolo County, the \$600,000 development will be operated by Dave and Dale Hanna. The steel span was engineered and built by the Winston plants in Sacramento and Stockton, San Joaquin County (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 6 of 30



**Figure 5. Interior view of Land Park Lanes under construction (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).**

Winston Steel Works, named after owner James Winston and founded in 1946, was a local producer of pre-fabricated steel warehouse and commercial buildings, with plants in Sacramento and Stockton. Winston had decades of experience as a designer, draftsman, engineer, estimator, and contractor and was a member of the Society of American Military Engineers, California Society of Professional Engineers, and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. The builder used cranes to assemble poured concrete slabs and welded pre-engineered steel elements to construct its buildings—a common technique that Winston Steel Works used to construct buildings throughout Sacramento and that was likely also used to erect AMF Land Park Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7). Winston Steel Works produced many pre-fabricated buildings in the Sacramento area and throughout Northern California, as well as a few buildings farther east and abroad. Most notably, Winston Steel Works built its own plant at 4700 West Capitol Avenue in Sacramento; a highway maintenance station in the Auburn area, which included a warehouse, office, garage, fuel house, and pump house; Palm Market in Auburn; a boiler house at St. Joseph's Hospital in Stockton; an exhibit building for the Inter-Mountain Fair; Hi Land Market at Watt Avenue and I Street in North Highlands, Sacramento; a storage building for General Mills in Lodi; a metal shop at Folsom Dam; a bowling alley in Nevada City; and two buildings at two uranium mills in Argentina (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7; 1954:45, 1959:23, 1962:4, 1957:31; *Nevada County Nugget* 1961:1; *Auburn Journal* 1957:15; *Lodi News-Sentinel* 1961:21; *Stockton Evening and Sunday Record* 1955:8). The company filed bankruptcy in 1964 and appears to have closed at that time (*The Sacramento Bee* 1964:65).

A grand opening advertisement for the bowling alley, which opened early November 1960, used the name Land Park Bowl and boasted Brunswick automatic pinsetters, subsurface ball returns, a nursery for children, a cocktail lounge, and a coffee shop featuring “excellent food” at modest prices. The bowling alley was also advertised as open 24 hours a day. Within the ad, a rendering of the building’s exterior shows its original appearance (Figure 6); several interior photographs were also included (Figure 8 and Figure 9) (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23). The earliest available photograph of the building’s exterior (Figure

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 7 of 30

7), from just before its opening, shows the original signage and indicates not all the exterior features in the rendering of the grand opening advertisement were included in the building's final design (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17). Based on this historical photograph, several original features have been altered since 1960. The original operators of the bowling alley were David Hanna, Dale Hanna, and Earl Warren (*The Sacramento Union* 1960b:35). In the 1960s and 1970s, the facility also offered bowling classes, leagues, and events for singles and seniors (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:82, 1976:40, 1969:28; Sheppard 1973:30). In the 1960s, the bowling alley suffered several ill-fated events—two robberies and two fires—and in 1974, the bowling alley was sold to Brunswick Corporation, which had previously operated the establishment under a lease (*The Sacramento Bee* 1961:32, 1966a:1, 1966b:32, 1968:64, 1974:46). The building continued to be operated as a bowling alley until its recent closure in March 2024 due to extensive damage to the building's interior (Walike 2024).



Figure 6. Part of the Land Park Bowl grand opening advertisement, showing an exterior rendering of Land Park Bowl (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 8 of 30

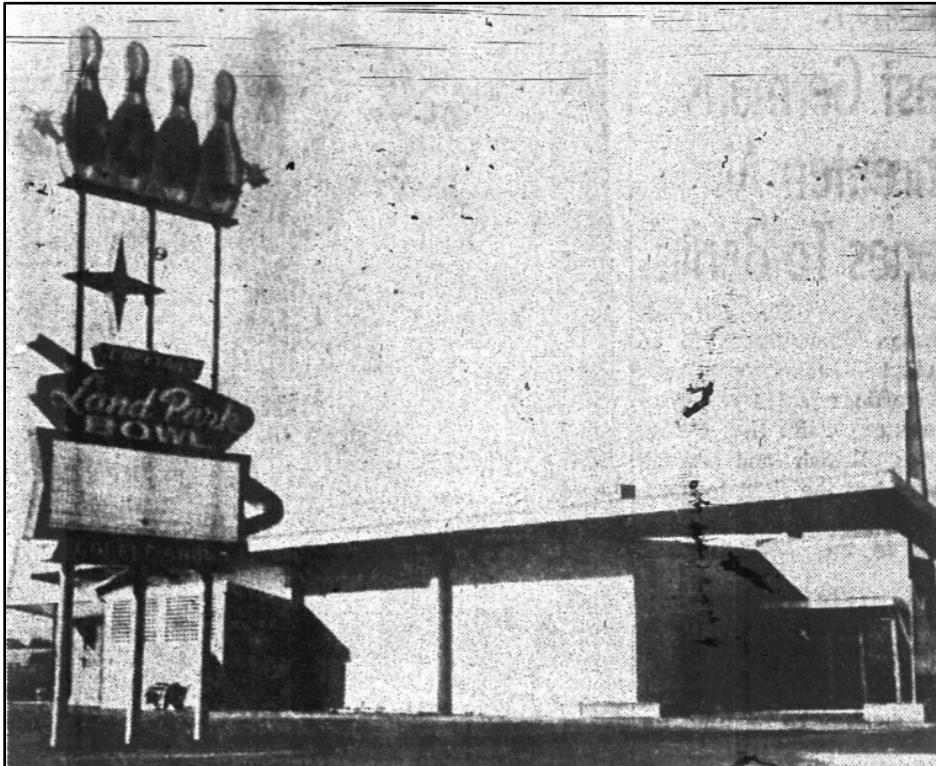


Figure 7. Land Park Bowl, 1960 (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17).

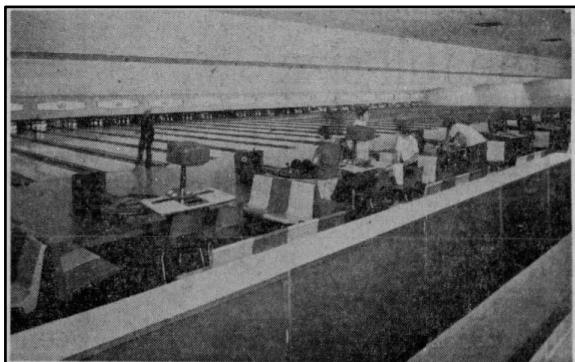


Figure 8. Bowling lanes at Land Park Bowl  
(*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).

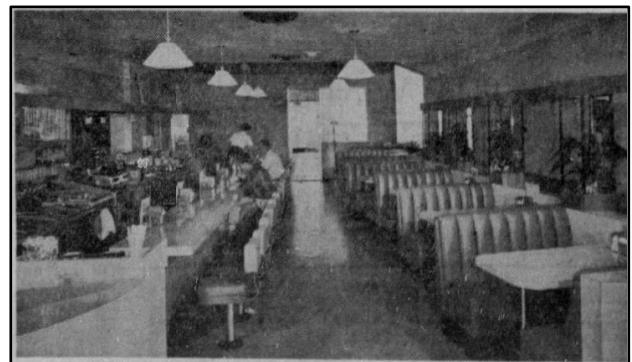


Figure 9. Coffee shop at Land Park Bowl (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 9 of 30

**\*B10. Significance (continued):**

### Historic Contexts

#### Development of Sacramento

##### *Nineteenth Century*

Before European colonization, Nisenan and Plains Miwok called the Sacramento area home. Spanish colonization, which primarily occurred along the southern and central coast of California, did not instantly affect the Indigenous populations of the interior of California. The first recorded European expedition into the interior of California occurred in 1808 by Gabriel Moraga. Moraga surveyed the region to find suitable locations for a future mission and named the Sacramento Valley and Sacramento River, after the Spanish word for sacrament. Throughout the next two decades, various travelers entered the Sacramento Valley, but no permanent non-Indigenous settlements were established until 1839.

In 1839 John Sutter, along with a few Hawaiian and European settlers, established the first non-Indigenous permanent settlement—a fort called New Helvetia. The land was granted by the Mexican government, which controlled California at the time after having gained independence from Spain in 1822. Sutter raised horses and cattle and farmed grain and corn. He also built a sawmill at present-day Coloma in El Dorado County, which would lead to the first discovery of gold in California in 1848 (Page & Turnbull 2019:19–20). The resulting Gold Rush spurred massive westward American migration and settlement of California, greatly influencing the broader history of the state and the United States. Thousands of migrants poured into California during the Gold Rush, greatly accelerating its development (California Department of Conservation 2005; Rice et al. 1994:169). The Gold Rush was a major factor in California's transformation from a sparsely populated western frontier to a center of industry, commerce, and trade. One year after the discovery at Sutter's Mill, nearly 90,000 people had migrated to California in search of gold. As the gateway to the Sierra Nevada and the goldfields of the foothills, Sacramento quickly became a transportation hub and nexus of Gold Rush economic activity (Page & Turnbull 2019:19-20; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

Also in 1848, and shortly after the discovery of gold in California, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and made California a territory of the United States (National Archives 2023). On January 4, 1850, California's first constitutional convention convened, establishing the first 18 counties. Over the succeeding months, additional counties were added, bringing the total to 27 on the day of California's admission to the United States on September 9, 1850. Sacramento County was one of those original counties, with the City of Sacramento its county seat. The City would become the capital of California in 1854, in large part due to the Gold Rush, which had caused massive population growth in the area and established its role as a center of commerce (California State Association of Counties 2019; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

While the primary draw to California in the late 1840s and early 1850s was the insatiable dream of striking it rich in the gold fields, many found the search for gold much more difficult than expected. Many of the people who migrated to the California gold fields, originally from agrarian and business backgrounds,

## **CONTINUATION SHEET**

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 10 of 30

soon realized the real riches lay in establishing enterprises that profited from miners, such as agricultural pursuits (California State Association of Counties 2019). This was true in Sacramento County, which is situated in the northern Central Valley, a region known for its rich agricultural lands. Grain cultivation and grazing dominated land use in the Sacramento area until the turn of the twentieth century when new crops such as citrus fruits and almonds took prominence (Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Amidst the Gold Rush and statehood, Sacramento was under formal development and soon began to take the shape of a true city. In December 1848, John Sutter, Jr. and Sam Brannan hired topographical engineer Captain William H. Warner and Lieutenant William Sherman to survey and layout "Sacramento City." The original city grid consisted of 26 lettered (originally A to Z, today C to Broadway) and 31 numbered (originally 1st to 31st, today Front to Alhambra) streets. Sacramento's city grid was built directly at the base of the American River flood basin, where centuries of Sierra Nevada snowmelt created temporary lakes each spring, well into the 1840s. Sacramento's original townsite was a 5-square-mile area, with each street 80 feet wide (except for Front and M) and each block 320 to 340 feet long. Each block was composed of many lots, and many blocks were divided by 20-foot-wide alleys (Figure 10) (Owens 2013:32–33, 42–43; Hallam 2013:63–64).

Sacramento grew through 1850; however, the population was not stable and remained largely transient aside from the core of merchants and hotel owners. California's population was undoubtedly increasing, but the population of Sacramento grew sluggishly and inconsistently due in part to the transient nature of the early Gold Rush miners, flooding, and fires that destroyed buildings. In September 1849, a destructive fire swept through the business district, destroying several blocks of canvas tent and wood-framed structures, followed by a major flood in January 1850. In 1852 fire again swept through the business district, destroying over 55 blocks of the city. Original buildings in Sacramento were wood frame and canvas, but as fires and floods became a way of life, citizens began to erect buildings of brick and raised the street level, leaving the original street level below grade.

In 1854 Sacramento became the capital of California. This rise in prominence, coupled with the City's strategic location and early commercial importance in the development of California, resulted in Sacramento becoming the western terminus for the first transcontinental railroad, which was constructed starting in 1863 and completed in 1869. The Central Pacific Railroad Company, which later became the Southern Pacific Railroad and then later the Union Pacific Railroad, was founded by a group of merchants and businessman known as "the Big Four," who were based in Sacramento, or had strong ties to the region. This development solidified Sacramento as a center for transportation in California, providing immediate links to San Francisco and the growing agricultural hinterlands of the central valleys with the rest of the United States (Owens 2013:48–50; Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Through the 1870s and into the 1900s, growth continued eastward away from the original core along the river embankment (or *embarcadero*) and K Street. The patterns of growth were often reflective of the types of amenities in given neighborhoods, including schools and parks. John Sutter Jr., the primary driving force for the development of Sacramento, had the City laid in a grid pattern with spaces specifically for city plazas. These plaza parks provided residents with publicly accessible spaces within an urban core. In the 1870s, several state government buildings were built in Sacramento, including the extant Capitol

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 11 of 30

Building and the adjacent landscaped park. As growth continued, pushed by the development of streetcars, which connected new neighborhoods with the urban commercial core, the main city grid began to fill. Homes were built in a variety of popular styles such as Greek Revival and Italianate. By the 1890s, speculators had begun to eye land outside of the main grid for development. This led to development of Sacramento's first residential suburban tracts of Oak Park, Elmhurst, Curtis Park, and East Sacramento (Kremer 2012; Page & Turnbull 2019:21, 27).

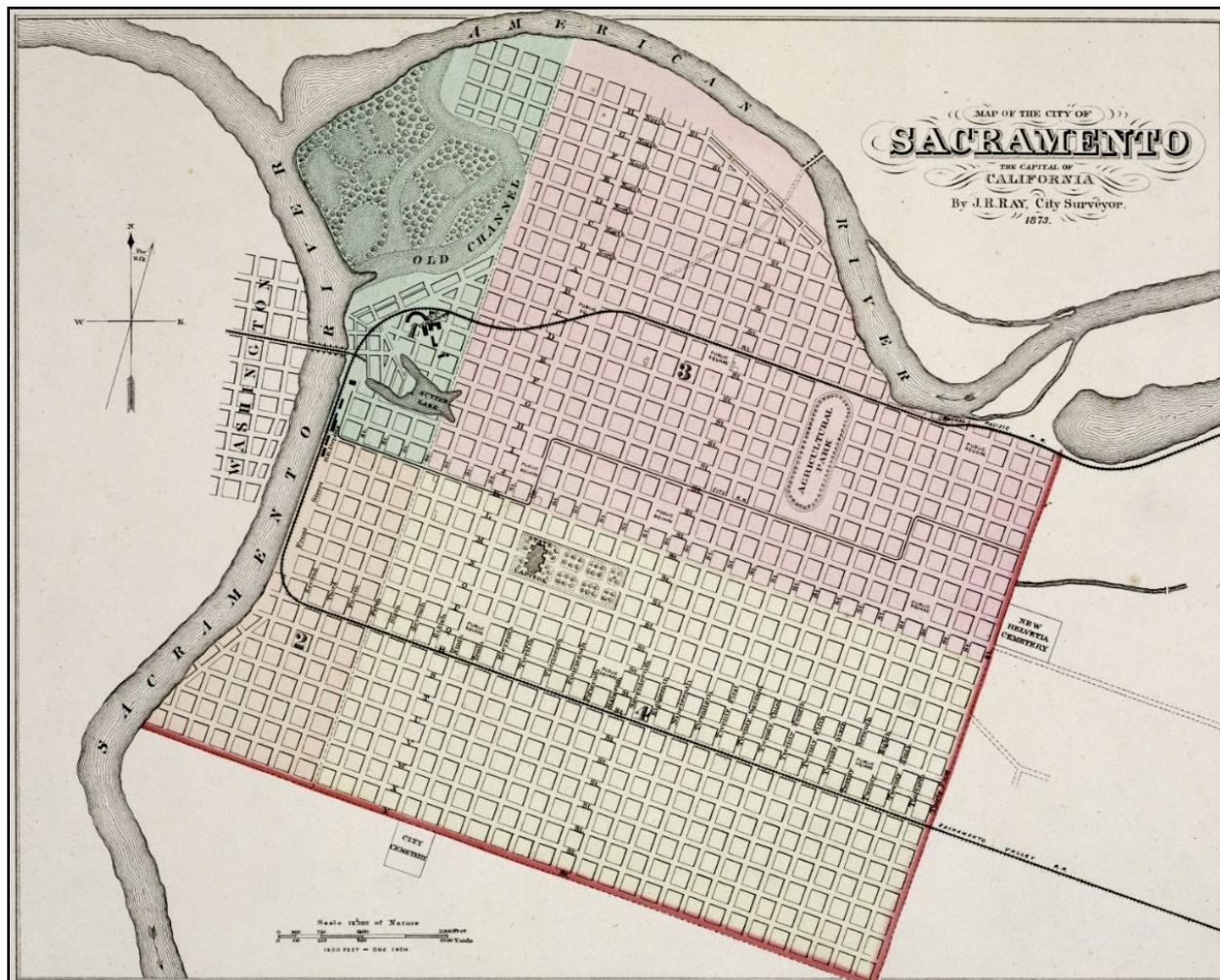


Figure 10. Surveyor's map of the City of Sacramento, California, 1874 (J. R. Ray). Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum.

### Twentieth Century

Sacramento continued to grow during the early to mid-twentieth century with increased residential, commercial, government, infrastructure, and transportation development. The early twentieth century was marked by steady growth and early suburbanization, while Sacramento's development during the

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 12 of 30

post-war period largely followed national trends of continued post-war suburbanization, expansion of the automobile, and late-twentieth century urban renewal, which sought to bring people back to cities that were broadly viewed negatively. Many Americans at the time saw cities as centers of disease and crime. Urban renewal, or urban revitalization, was undertaken across the United States during the 1950s to 1980s (Williams 2013:v, 23–25; Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

In the early twentieth century, residential expansion grew outward from downtown Sacramento to the fringes of the original city limits. These new homes were built in a myriad of newly popular architectural styles such as Prairie and Craftsman styles. Affluent homes were typically built on east–west-aligned streets, while moderately sized homes were constructed on the numbered streets. Ancillary buildings such as stables and cottages for laborers were constructed facing alleys. Several new neighborhoods like Boulevard Park, Winn Park, Newton Booth, and Bungalow Row emerged during this time, largely along streetcar lines. In addition to streetcars, in the early twentieth century, Sacramento developed four electric interurban railroads for passenger service. The service had more frequent railroad stops and were faster than the streetcars. Streetcar service ended in 1947, but some passenger rail service continues. Many new civic buildings were built in downtown Sacramento in the early twentieth century. This new civic construction largely adhered to popular styles at the time, notably Neoclassical Revival and Beaux-Arts Revival. This type of development briefly slowed during the Great Depression but was renewed during and post-World War II. Several military facilities were constructed at McClellan Field, Mather Field, and the Sacramento Army Depot while new state buildings were constructed surrounding Capitol Park (Page & Turnbull 2019:26, 32–33). Pre-war commercial development was largely within downtown and midtown (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-16).

Sacramento underwent many changes in the mid-twentieth century as a direct result of World War II and expansion of the automobile. The economy shifted from primarily agriculture to military, federal and state government, and transportation industries. Alongside the national population, Sacramento saw significant population growth of its own, with an increase from 105,958 in 1940 to 137,572 in 1950. This growing population was also more mobile than ever before, spurring expansion of development outside of Sacramento's downtown core. The growing post-war population spurred a housing shortage and rapid construction of new homes. New post-war residences were most frequently built in Minimal Traditional and Mid-Century Modern styles outside of the core city and in suburban areas (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-4). In 1947 planning for a new freeway system began, marking the beginning of a shift to automobile travel instead of streetcar and rail service. By 1961, the South Sacramento, Elvas, and Capital City Freeways were complete. The city core connected to these routes via surface streets. By 1954, planning for an east–west-oriented freeway was underway (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-13–2-14).

World War II also had a profound effect on the Japanese-American population; more than 7,000 Japanese-American Sacramento residents were forcibly relocated to internment camps during the war, and of those, only 59% returned to the city after the war. During this time, the government instituted the Bracero Program to fill job vacancies left by the removal of Japanese-American citizens with temporary Mexican labor. The program resulted in a shift in the ethnic makeup of Sacramento's labor force (Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 13 of 30

With the increasing availability and affordability of automobiles in the post-war era, most new residents, drawn to Sacramento for its available jobs, began life in the suburbs. For these same reasons, in the 1950s, state government buildings began to be dispersed throughout the city and post-war commercial development was largely focused on areas outside of downtown Sacramento, specifically in areas south, east, and northeast of downtown (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; Page & Turnbull 2019:22, 26–28). New commercial development was focused on independent business alongside major thoroughfares outside of downtown and through or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Some major retailers also left downtown, such as Sears, which moved to a new suburban location in 1956. The City convinced Macy's to construct a new downtown store, which was completed in 1963, but this did not have the desired effect of inspiring new downtown commercial development (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-19).

Like the automobile and World War II, urban renewal had a profound impact across Sacramento during the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1950s, the City began efforts of urban renewal, starting with the West End, Sacramento's skid row, through the newly created Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA). Subsequent plans undertaken in the 1960s to 1970s also involved redeveloping the Capitol Mall, Alkali Flat, and Oak Park areas. The roots of urban renewal date to the 1940s. At the federal level, the Housing Act of 1949 provided federal subsidies for local redevelopment projects and gave local agencies the power to acquire parcels through eminent domain for redevelopment, and the Housing Act of 1954 coined the term urban renewal. At the state level, urban renewal dates to the 1945 Community Development Act. The movement was a reaction to the economic decline in cities across the country as commercial and residential development largely moved to the suburbs. Cities at the time were broadly viewed negatively. Sacramento's West End was seen as a center of vice, disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency. Ultimately, urban renewal resulted in mass demolition of buildings that displaced thousands of residents and businesses in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-7-2-8; Page & Turnbull 2019:28, 30; Williams 2013:25). Despite the renewal efforts, the suburban model for development with sprawling expansions of residential neighborhoods, strip malls, and shopping centers would continue to define Sacramento and the surrounding region during the twentieth century, as evident in present-day.

### South Land Park

The project area lies within South Land Park, which was annexed in the 1950s and today is bounded by Suterville Road to the north, Florin Avenue to the south, Freeport Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the west. The area is known for its “rolling hills, mature native oak trees, and curving streets” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-35). The Land Park area, including South Land Park, was named for William Land, Sacramento's mayor from 1898 to 1899, who made his fortune with hotels in downtown Sacramento. Before it was Land Park, the area was part of New Helvetia, an 11-square-league Mexican land grant given to John Sutter in 1841 by then-governor Juan B. Alvarado (Isidro 2005:7-13, 18; Hoffman 1862). Development during this period was largely north of Suterville Road in the town of Suterville, within present-day Land Park but north of South Land Park. Early sketches show Suterville as a burgeoning community as early as 1846 and include a brickyard, carpenter, blacksmith, and several saloons by 1847. Suterville Brewery was built on the south side of Suterville Road for Robert H. Vance in 1853, within the northernmost part of South Land Park. The brewery was demolished in 1853 and was known as Suterville's last remaining building (Whittle 2009; Isidro 2005:9). By 1885, the entire Sutter land grant had

## **CONTINUATION SHEET**

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 14 of 30

been divided into many tracts ranging from 10 to over 1,000 acres and sold to many different property owners (Shepherd 1885).

The first homes in South Land Park were built as early as 1902, at the southwest corner of present-day Sutterville Road and Freeport Boulevard, and several more homes were built by 1907 (U.S. Geological Survey 1902, 1907). The Mead Family, which built residences during this time, is largely attributed to developing the area. In the 1940s, after the economic downturn of the Great Depression, developers began larger-scale projects in South Land Park, though there was a pause during World War II. Since the 1940s, hundreds of homes have been constructed in South Land Park, and Freeport Boulevard has become a busy shopping district. The South Land Park Hills Historic District alone features 49 residences built by developer Joseph Eichler from 1955 to 1956, known for his non-discriminatory housing policies during segregation. By the early 1970s, construction of Interstates 5 and 80 was complete, providing better access to South Land Park and further solidifying the importance of the automobile and suburbanization in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-14, 2-35-2-36; *Sacramento City Express* 2024). Today, the neighborhood continues to retain its suburban qualities with post-war single-family residences and commercial corridors dotted with low-density shopping centers and strip malls.

### **Bowling and Bowling Alleys in Sacramento**

The game of bowling, and its variations of target bowling (bocce, lawn bowls, etc.) and pin bowling, have ancient and widespread roots with early variations having been practiced in Egypt in the sixth century, Polynesia, and elsewhere. Modern bowling in the United States, however, evolved from traditions brought over by European immigrants and settlers, primarily from Germany and other parts of northern Europe. The earliest portrayal of the game in the United States was in Washington Irving's 1819 book *Rip Van Winkle*, which depicted characters playing an early variation of the game known as ninepins. Over the following decades, bowling became increasingly popular, resulting in the construction of indoor lanes in New York and other cities with large German populations, including Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and others (United States Bowling Conference 2024).

With the discovery of gold in California at Sutter's Mill on the American River in 1848, the ensuing Gold Rush lured thousands of people from all over the world, including the eastern United States, as well as western Europe. Throughout the mining camps and emerging towns and centers, drinking and gambling were often the most ubiquitous forms of entertainment and recreation with saloons and gambling halls being constructed from the ports of San Francisco up into the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada, earning early California an overall reputation for "moral laxity" (Khoury 2012). Gambling games varied, ranging from cards to bullfights, boxing and races, to bowling and billiards. Bowling was particularly popular during the Gold Rush with many saloons and gambling halls constructing adjoining bowling alleys as an added amenity for patrons. In an 1851 letter written by Dame Shirley (Shirley and Russell 1922), the wife of a mining camp doctor, to her sister, she wrote:

The rolling on the bowling alley never leaves off for ten consecutive minutes at any time during the entire twenty-four hours. It is a favorite amusement of the mines; and the only difference that Sunday makes is that it never leaves off for one minute.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 15 of 30

As the launching point into the gold fields and mining camps of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 1850s Sacramento featured several saloons, billiard rooms, gambling halls, and bowling alleys. One of the earliest advertised bowling alleys was the Central Bowling Alley, located at No.51 J Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets, which boasted four 70-foot lanes that were constructed "in the most substantial manner" and a bar "supplied with the most choice liquors of all kinds, and the finest flavored cigars . . ." (*Daily California Statesman* 1855; *The Sacramento Bee* 1857). Many other bowling alleys were located throughout the central portion of the city, located in adjoining buildings or within the basements of saloons, which often featured billiards, shooting galleries, dance halls, and stages for live music. One such place was called "The New Corner," which was in the basement of the Morse Building, which is still standing in Old Sacramento at 1025-1031 2nd Street (*The Sacramento Bee* 1866). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the game also had popularity outside of the saloons and gambling halls as a simple form of recreation, with alleys constructed in upper class social clubs, as well as the construction of lanes by the Sacramento Athletic Club and the Sacramento Young Men's Christian Association as a form of recreation alongside gymnastics, fitness, and other forms of sport alongside intellectual and spiritual pursuits (*The Sacramento Union* 1887). Wealthy individuals also constructed their own personal bowling alleys within their grand mansions and estates within Sacramento and the surrounding area. One of the most notable was that of Adolph Heilbron, a German cattle rancher and landowner, who constructed his grand Italianate mansion at 704 O Street; the still extant residence was listed on the NRHP in 1976 (*The Sacramento Bee* 1892; Price 1975). Despite this proliferation of bowling as a more popular form of recreation, the majority of alleys and lanes continued to be in the setting of saloons, bars, and German-owned beer gardens well into the early twentieth century (*The Sacramento Bee* 1896; Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:187).



Figure 11. Early bowling alley in Sacramento, 1915 (International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame 2024).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 16 of 30

As Sacramento expanded with the development of early streetcar suburbs in the early twentieth century, so did new recreation halls. In Oak Park and East Sacramento, new bowling alleys were developed as the sport continued to proliferate within popular culture. New bowling leagues were founded and tournaments were held at locations such as the Sequoia Bowling Alley on 909 K Street, drawing in teams from around the Sacramento area to regularly compete for a variety of prizes (*The Sacramento Star* 1910). Emerging as its own sport, local bowling scores were often increasingly published in local papers under the sports section. While the sport had previously been exclusive to men, women and youth bowlers became increasingly common during the 1920s and the sport was marketed to a broader, albeit Caucasian, demographic with new leagues, tournaments, and other events (*The Sacramento Union* 1931; Shannon 2017:3).

Bowling had been long associated with drinking establishments and the sale of alcohol; however, the enactment of prohibition in 1920 quickly changed the game. Many of the alleys associated with taverns and saloons were closed, while some bowling alley owners reorganized their business model to focus on the sport itself, decoupling from associations with alcohol and creating a more family-friendly pastime (Riess 2015:187). During this period, the common naming conventions of bowling alleys changed, often substituting the words like bowl or lane instead of alley. Rules and standards of the game and the distinctly American 10-pin variant were more codified and regulated by organizations like the American Bowling Congress, and new dry purpose-built bowling alleys were constructed throughout the United States, bringing the sport into the mainstream (Riess 2015:187; Shannon 2017:1-3). Despite the proliferation of bowling into popular culture as part of prohibition, a more widespread expansion of bowling alleys did not occur until its repeal, allowing for drinking to again become part of the bowling pastime, establishing it as a major outlet for socializing and recreation in communities, particularly for young men (Riess 2015:188). Unlike the bowling alleys before, large new bowling facilities with multiple lanes were constructed under the new specifications of the sport with bowling as the primary activity and not an added amenity as a barroom game. Just before World War II, there were an estimated 12 million bowlers in the United States, and the sport continued to grow in popularity steadily over the 1930s through World War II (Shannon 2017:1-4).

Many of these new post-Prohibition “bowling palaces” were constructed in Sacramento during the 1930s and early 1940s, including Capitol Bowl at 1415 L Street (1939), North Bowl at 1721 Del Paso Boulevard (1941), and Alhambra Bowl at 1229 Alhambra Boulevard (1942) (*The Sacramento Union* 1939, 1941; *The Sacramento Bee* 1942a). These facilities were composed in a Streamlined or Moderne style (Figure 12 and Figure 13) architecture with prominent marquee, and often featured a dozen or so lanes, air conditioning, restaurant corners, cocktail lounges, league meeting rooms, locker rooms, spectator seating areas, and occasionally billiard rooms (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942a).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 17 of 30

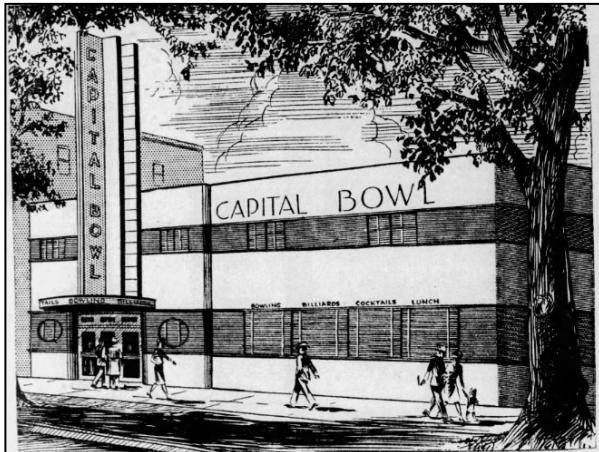


Figure 12. Advertisement for the Capitol Bowl, 1939 (*The Sacramento Union*).



Figure 13. Image of Alhambra Bowl from a 1942 flyer (Sacramento Public Library).

During World War II, bowling alleys in Sacramento remained open although construction of new alleys stalled. An exception was on military bases in the area, where bowling lanes were installed as a form of recreation for the servicemen (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942b). Approximately 4,500 bowling lanes were constructed on military bases across the United States during World War II and more women's leagues were established amongst civilians. It was not until the post-war period that the expansion of bowling as a sport reached a new level of popularity outside of military bases. The 1950s and 1960s are often considered the golden age of bowling with new purpose-built bowling facilities constructed throughout the rapidly expanding post-war landscape of American cities and towns (Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:188). Bowling was an important aspect of recreation in post-war America, with an estimated 20 million bowlers across the country in 1948. A one-lane bowling alley was even installed in the White House by President Truman in 1947. Many of these post-war bowling alleys had restaurants, meeting or banquet rooms, and lounges that served as places to socialize or gather local clubs, groups, and organizations. Most often, they were constructed in Mid-Century Modern architectural styles, with the Googie style being most notable, and eye-catching signage, such as the one at Fireside Lanes in Sacramento (Figure 14), was a key design element (Shannon 2017:1, 4, 20-22; Pope Studios 1960).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 18 of 30



**Figure 14. Fireside Lanes, 1960 (Pope Studios). Courtesy of the Sacramento Public Library.**

Sacramento was no exception with new modern and larger bowling alleys constructed throughout the expanding reaches of the cities growing suburbs in the post-war era. New bowling alleys included Sacramento Bowl located at 917 6th Street (1948), Town and Country Bowl on Fulton Avenue (1956) South Bowl at 5005 Stockton Boulevard (1958), El Rancho Bowl at 900 West Capitol Avenue in West Sacramento (1959), Country Club Lanes at 2600 Watt Avenue (1960), Cordova Lanes in Rancho Cordova (1960), Fireside Lanes (1960) at 7901 Auburn Boulevard (see Figure 14), and Land Park Bowl at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (1960) (*The Sacramento Union* 1956, 1958, 1959, 1960a; Pope Studios 1960).

By the 1950s, bowling was solidified as an American pastime suitable for families, a stark difference from its early association with gambling. New facilities, typically composed in some variation of the Mid-Century Modern style, also featured significantly more lanes, new technologies, and amenities. Bowling centers with 40 to 60 lanes became most common in the United States, and new technologies such as air conditioning, automatic pin setters, and underground ball returns became widespread. In Sacramento, smaller 20- to 40-lane bowling alleys were most common. Like bowling alley exteriors, interiors were also often lavishly designed with colorful carpets, murals, and other decorative details. These types of bowling alleys were built rapidly across the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, and substantial building costs over one million dollars were not uncommon. Bowling center amenities

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 19 of 30

continued to expand. Cocktail lounges and meeting rooms were still common, but instructional programs, live musical performances, coffee shops, concessions, childcare facilities, and pro-equipment shops also became common offerings. Many bowling alleys of this era were also open 24 hours a day to further attract diverse clientele. Some bowling alleys even offered laundry and grocery shopping services to attract housewives during daytime hours. The number of children bowling also substantially increased in the post-war era with nearly 400,000 members of the Junior Congress bowling association in 1959 (Riess 2015:188; Shannon 2017:3-5).

Because of racial segregation, the bowling centers of this era were typically restricted to white Americans and the clientele was largely suburban, though with the encouragement of the National Bowling Association, some bowling alleys provided specific times for people of color to bowl. More often, older outdated bowling alleys were purchased specifically for use by persons of color (Shannon 2017:5). Of the bowling alleys constructed in Sacramento during this period, one of the most notable was the El Rancho Bowl (now Capitol Bowl), which is believed to be the first racially integrated bowling alleys in the region, allowing for patrons of any race to partake and form leagues at the facility (Saizan 2014). Another notable bowling alley was Country Club Lanes, which was the largest and most celebrated of these facilities during this period. In addition to the wide array of amenities, the building featured iconic Mid-Century Modern architecture with some Googie-inspired elements with its broad parabolic entrance canopies (Figure 15; *The Sacramento Union* 1960a).



Figure 15. Advertisement for the opening of Country Club Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1960a).

By the 1970s, with increased forms of recreation and entertainment available to the public, the popularity of bowling started to wane. Bowling leagues became less popular and many bowling establishments were forced to close. As women entered the workforce in greater numbers, daytime customers became fewer. Many bowling alleys were demolished during this period as land values increased. This trend would continue in part throughout the remainder of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. As part of this, many of the larger bowling centers built additional amenities to attract patrons, such as

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 20 of 30

arcades. The character-defining features of many early bowling alleys were removed as they were purchased and updated in the 1970s and 1980s (Shannon 2017:5–6). New bowling alleys constructed at this later date were often within the setting of larger gaming facilities or bars, such as Punch Bowl Social in downtown Sacramento, offering only a few lanes as a single amenity and novelty rather than the primary form of recreation.

### Mid-Century Modern Architecture

As discussed in the previous section, bowling alleys of the post-war era, like AMF Land Park Lanes, were typically built in Mid-Century Modern styles. Modernism emerged as a popular architectural style and aesthetic philosophy throughout the United States during the early-to-mid twentieth century, reaching its heyday in the post-World War II era. Modernism was greatly influenced by industrialization during and after World War II, which made new building materials such as glass and steel more common and affordable. Modernism markedly diverged from past architectural styles with its function over ornamentation ethos. Several Modernist-style offshoots developed during the twentieth century, including Googie, International, and Late Moderne (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1–3-10). Though many of these styles had key differences, they typically shared the following features:

**Form** – overall geometric massing and simple, clean lines; emphasis on horizontality, though not with unrelieved flat planes; in multi-story structures, interior floors are often demarcated on the exterior with an inset first floor and cantilevered planes to indicate upper floors.

**Structure** – exposed structural system typically using concrete, steel, or wood materials, and some concrete block or masonry for smaller structures.

**Roof** – flat or low-pitches, often with deep overhangs/eaves emphasizing horizontality; some with large sweeping or folded forms.

**Exterior and interior walls** – contrasting materials and textures or smooth, blank walls typically filling entire structural “bays”; exterior walls and openings in offset planes along horizontal lines; use of exterior screens or grills that shelter window and door openings, usually in concrete or metal.

**Windows** – custom windows (ribbon, picture, corner); large expanses of glass arranged in horizontal groupings of vertically oriented sashes, with glazing often filling entire structural bays; windows may be located in clerestory, between solid walls and eaves.

**Integrated site planning and landscapes designs** – sliding glass doors, integrated indoor and outdoor private living spaces, courtyards with screens, walls, berms, or plantings that provide demarcation between private and public outdoor spaces; plantings generally have a horizontal orientation relative to sun angles and topography (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-5–3-6).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 21 of 30

During the war, material rations and a moratorium on housing construction in the United States stagnated the construction of Modernist architecture. After the war, with these limitations removed, the economy in a period of prosperity, and the population expanding, there was a construction boom that favored Modern design principles and features. Modernist architecture of the post-war era is referred to under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modernism. A variety of property types were newly constructed in the Mid-Century Modern style in the post-war era, including residential, institutional, commercial, and educational buildings (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1-3-6, 3-9-3-10). Common features of these buildings included “cantilevered roofs, flat or shed roof forms, deep overhanging eaves, canted and large expansive windows, and a variety of incorporated materials, including wood, stone, brick, stucco, plastic, metal, and concrete” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-9-3-10). Styles under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modern architecture included Modern Ranch, Contemporary, Commercial Modern, Brutalism, and more (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-10-3-15).

During the 1950s to 1970s, Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture was often influenced by the earlier International style. On the opposite end of the spectrum, many commercial buildings in the 1950s and 1960s, were built in the striking Googie (or Exaggerated Modern) style. While the International style, and Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture influenced by the style, was defined by crisp clean lines, flat roofs, horizontality, and limited ornamentation, the Googie style was dramatic and striking. Common features of Googie-style architecture included exaggerated non-linear rooflines, irregular massing and asymmetrical façades, colorful accents, prominent signage, neon lights, and starburst motifs (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-8-3-9, 3-12). Key commercial corridors in Sacramento include Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Freeport Boulevard, Broadway, Del Paso Boulevard, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and Capitol Avenue. Examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture, such as the Loan/Chase Bank (4701 Freeport Boulevard) (Figure 16) and Gunther's Ice Cream (2801 Franklin Boulevard), can be found within these areas (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:1-6, 2-13). The South Land Park Hills (Eichler) Historic District is composed of 49 Mid-Century Modern homes (*Sacramento City Press* 2024).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 22 of 30



**Figure 16. Loan/Chase Bank Building, 2017 (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017).**

### Eligibility Evaluation

SWCA carefully considered whether AMF Land Park Lanes possesses historical significance under any CRHR or Sacramento Register criteria and historical integrity under the seven aspects of integrity. As the eligibility criteria for both registers is analogous, eligibility is considered concurrently, below.

#### **Criteria 1/I**

AMF Land Park Lanes is not significantly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history under CRHR Criterion 1 and Sacramento Register Criterion I. While the bowling alley was part of a broader trend of the growing popularity of bowling in the mid-twentieth century and the proliferation of new bowling alleys throughout the United States during that period, AMF Land Park Lanes was one of hundreds of mid-century bowling alleys built across the United States and one of many built in the Sacramento area during this period, of which more characteristic and influential examples exist. The subject property also did not have an influence on the development of bowling or patterns of development relating to bowling, which was one of the earliest forms of recreation in Sacramento and the surrounding region. Furthermore, the subject building was one of the later bowling alleys constructed in area during this post-war “Golden Age” of bowling. The property also did not have an influence on the broader development of South Land Park and, on its own, does not characterize the

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 23 of 30

commercial development of this area. In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not a good representation of the themes and period it is associated with, indicating the associations do not rise to the threshold of historical significance. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under Criteria 1/I.

### Criterion 2/II

There is no evidence that the AMF Land Park Lanes has an important association with any person or persons who made significant contributions to history at the local, state, or national level. Research did not reveal any notable figures specifically associated with the bowling alley, and research did not indicate the potential for significant associations in this regard. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2 and Sacramento Register Criterion II.

### Criterion 3/III, IV, and V

Constructed in 1960, the AMF Land Park Lanes building is composed in the Mid-Century Modern style. Although the building was originally designed and rendered with many hallmarks of the style—full-height glazing entrance system, flagstone cladding, and L-shaped columns integrated into a pronounced folded plate roofline—what was constructed in the building's original form was notably reduced in detail, creating a simpler and more commonplace characterization of the style (see Figure 14). Furthermore, AMF Land Park Lanes formerly had a distinct, lavish sign characteristic of Mid-Century Modern commercial properties and typical of post-war bowling alleys; however, this sign is no longer extant. Outside of the L-shaped decorative awning and the triangular structure at the entrance, the building currently lacks any characteristic Mid-Century Modern features. Additionally, the non-extant sign was the only notable characteristic of the original design that represented broader themes of architecture and design regarding both the Mid-Century Modern style and post-war bowling alley design. Due to the removal of this feature and other alterations found throughout the building, the current building is essentially a simple box form with simple Modern-style elements at the entrance. Overall, in its current condition, the subject property does not embody the Mid-Century Modern style, particularly within the context of South Land Park and Sacramento, which features a notable collection of Mid-Century Modern resources that better embody the style and its characteristics.

As an example of the post-war bowling alley property type, the subject property does not appear to rise to a level of significance. Although these post-war bowling alleys are becoming increasingly rare, several examples exist within the Sacramento area that better reflect the characteristics of the typology, the most notable of which is the extant Country Club Lanes building, which was the largest and most celebrated bowling alley of the period, complete with amenities and architectural details that fully embody the typology and this era in bowling alley design. By comparison, the subject building, particularly in its altered state, is a typical and lackluster example of this typology and does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria.

There is no known architect for the property; though, its simple design indicates its engineer and builder, Winston Steel Works, was likely also responsible for the design. Winston Steel Works has not had a profound influence on the history of architecture, design, or engineering; research indicates the company only ever produced pre-fabricated buildings using well-established construction and assembly techniques.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 24 of 30

The steel span roof structure was, at its time of construction, believed by Winston Steel Works to be the largest in Northern California, but it was not a new feat of engineering, as large steel span roof systems have been common in California and the United States since the post-war era. The engineering of the building was also pre-fabricated and not unique. Many such roof systems dating to the mid-century period also exist throughout Northern California, and while AMF Land Parks Lanes may have had one of the largest in Northern California for a time, this would have been a brief and/or very marginal accolade not reaching the threshold of historical significance. As such, the subject property lacks historical significance for its engineering. Similarly, the building does not appear to be a significant work of a master architect or builder.

In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not historically significant for its engineering or as the work of a master architect or builder, nor does it significantly embody the characteristics of Mid-Century Modern architecture or the post-war bowling alley property type in Sacramento. Thus, the subject property is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V.

### Criterion D

The history of bowling in the United States and Mid-Century Modern architecture in Sacramento are well-documented and understood topics. No other historical or pre-historic associations with the property are known to exist, and thus, the bowling alley property is unlikely to yield additional information important to prehistory or history. As such, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4 and Sacramento Register Criterion VI.

### Summary of Eligibility

This eligibility evaluation finds that while AMF Land Park Lanes has some historical associations under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V with Mid-Century Modern architecture and post-war bowling alley design, the property does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria as more notable and better examples of both are found in this locality. This is exacerbated by various alterations, which have impacted the building's overall integrity and its ability to convey any potential significance under these criteria. The subject property also lacks historical significance under CRHR/Sacramento Register Criteria 1/I, 2/II, and 4/VI. Thus, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes **not eligible** for the CRHR and Sacramento Register

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Page 29 of 30

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## LOCATION MAP

Primary#

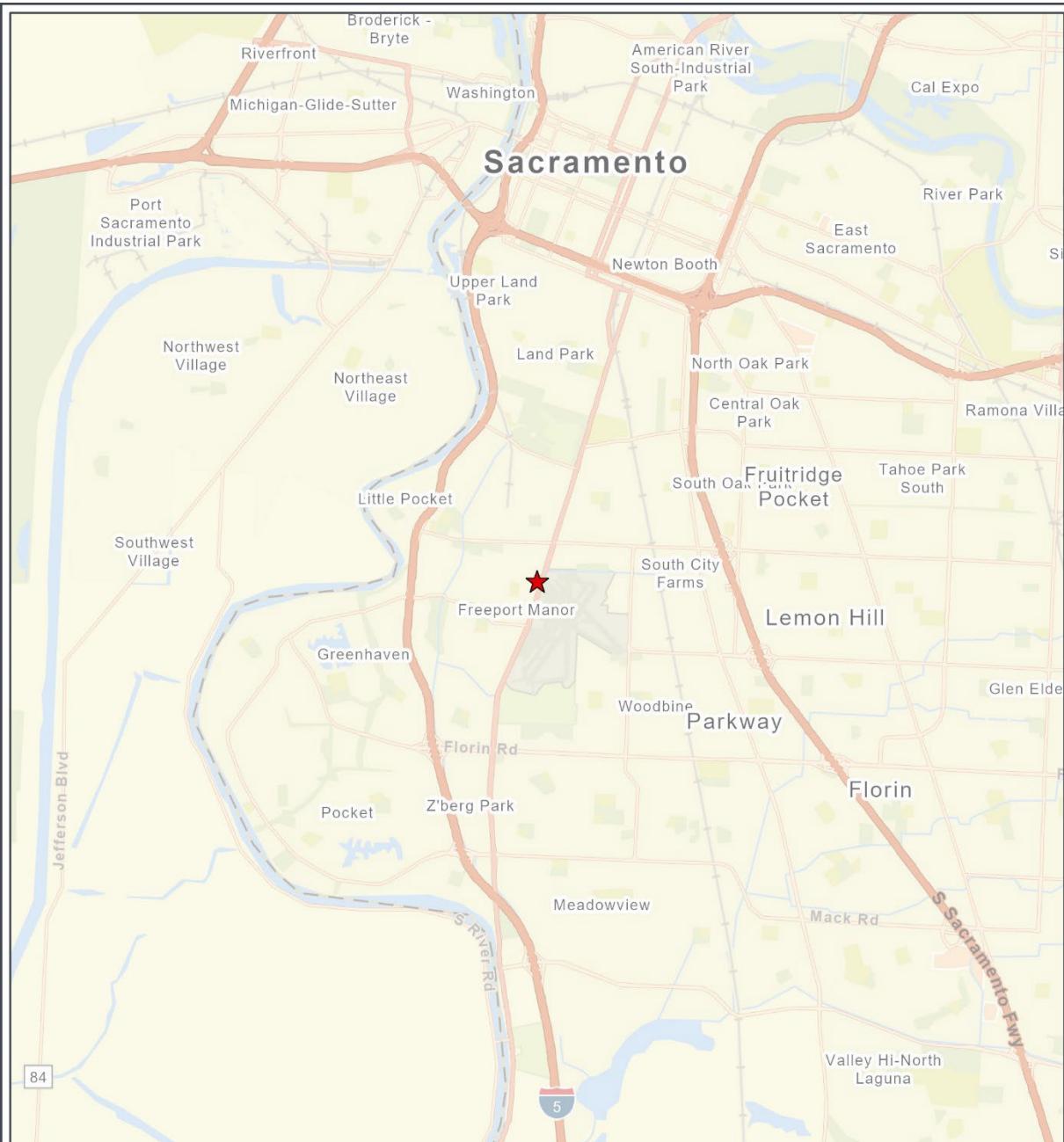
HR#

Trinomial

Page 30 of 30

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) AMF Land Park Lanes

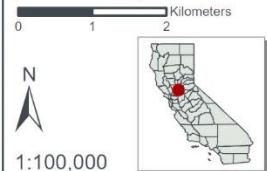
\*Date of map: 2024



★ Project Location

Sacramento County, CA  
NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N  
38.5193°N 121.4998°W

0 0.5 1 Miles  
0 1 2 Kilometers



Base Map: Esri ArcGIS Online,  
accessed October 2024  
Updated: 10/24/2024  
Project No. 93135  
Layout: 93135\_Pri\_Vic  
Apx: 93135\_working

1:100,000

**SWCA**  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS



# Historic Resources Evaluation of 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento, Sacramento County, California

OCTOBER 2024

PREPARED FOR  
**Bowlero Corporation**

PREPARED BY  
**SWCA Environmental Consultants**

**HISTORIC RESOURCES EVALUATION OF  
5850 FREEPORT BOULEVARD (AMF LAND PARK LANES),  
SACRAMENTO, SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Prepared for

**Bowlero Corporation**  
7313 Bell Creek Rd  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111  
Attn: Steve Moroneso

Prepared by

Lisa "LC" Demarais, M.H.P., and Dan Herrick, M.H.C.

Principal Investigator

Garret Root, M.A.

**SWCA Environmental Consultants**  
100 Howe Avenue, Suite 230N  
Sacramento, California 95825  
(916) 427-0703  
[www.swca.com](http://www.swca.com)

SWCA Project No. 93135

SWCA Cultural Resources Report No. 24-791

October 2024

## **MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

**Purpose and Scope:** In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and pursuant to request by the City of Sacramento (City), Bowlero Corporation (Bowlero) retained SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) to conduct a historic resources evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes located at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California (subject property). The purpose of the current study was to determine whether AMF Land Park Lanes qualifies as a historical resource, as defined by CEQA, and to assist the City in consideration of the proposed demolition of the subject building.

To evaluate AMF Land Park Lanes, SWCA conducted property research, completed an architectural field survey, documented the subject property and its existing conditions, developed relevant historic contexts, and assessed the potential historical significance of the property to determine potential eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register), per each inventory programs criteria. This Historic Resources Evaluation Report provides the results of the study.

**Findings:** After careful consideration of the history, design, and historical associations of the subject property, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes ***not eligible*** for listing in the CRHR or Sacramento Register due to a lack of historical significance under any CRHR and Sacramento Register Criteria. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes does not qualify as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA compliance.

## CONTENTS

<b>Management Summary .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Qualifications of Personnel .....	1
Location and Setting.....	1
Methodology .....	4
Literature Review.....	4
Archival Research.....	4
Field Survey.....	4
<b>Regulatory Framework .....</b>	<b>4</b>
California Environmental Quality Act .....	4
California Register of Historical Resources .....	5
Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources .....	6
<b>Historic Context .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Development of the City of Sacramento .....	6
Nineteenth Century .....	6
Twentieth Century .....	9
Bowling and Bowling Alleys in Sacramento .....	11
Mid-Century Modern Architecture.....	15
<b>Evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes.....</b>	<b>17</b>
Property History .....	17
Existing Conditions .....	20
Observed Alterations.....	23
Evaluation Considerations.....	23
Evaluation of Eligibility .....	25
Criteria 1/I.....	25
Criteria 2/II .....	25
Criteria 3/III, IV, and V .....	25
Criteria 4/VI.....	26
Eligibility Recommendation Summary.....	26
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>References Cited.....</b>	<b>28</b>

## Appendices

Appendix A. Department of Parks and Recreation 523 Forms

## Figures

Figure 1. Project vicinity map.....	2
Figure 2. Project location map.....	3
Figure 3. Surveyor's map of the city of Sacramento, California, 1874 (J. R. Ray). Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum. ....	8
Figure 4. Early bowling alley in Sacramento, 1915 (International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame 2024).....	12
Figure 5. Advertisement for the Capitol Bowl, 1939 ( <i>The Sacramento Union</i> ). ....	13
Figure 6. Image of Alhambra Bowl from a 1942 flyer (Sacramento Public Library).....	13
Figure 7. Fireside Lanes, 1960 (Pope Studios). Courtesy of the Sacramento Public Library.....	14
Figure 8. Advertisement for the opening of Country Club Lanes ( <i>The Sacramento Union</i> 1960).....	15
Figure 9. Loan/Chase Bank Building, 2017 (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017).....	17
Figure 10. Interior view of Land Park Lanes under construction ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960a:17).....	18
Figure 11. Part of the Land Park Bowl grand opening advertisement, showing an exterior rendering of Land Park Bowl ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960b:23). ....	19
Figure 12. Bowling lanes at Land Park Bowl ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960:23). ....	20
Figure 13. Coffee shop at Land Park Bowl ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960:23). ....	20
Figure 14. Land Park Bowl, 1960 ( <i>The Sacramento Bee</i> 1960:A17). ....	20
Figure 15. East (primary) façade; view facing west. ....	21
Figure 16. South façade; view facing north. ....	22
Figure 17. West (left) and south (right) façades; view facing northeast.....	22
Figure 18. North façade; view facing south. ....	23

## INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) was retained by Bowlero Corporation (Bowlero) to conduct a historic resources evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes located at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California (subject property) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and at the request of the City of Sacramento (City). Bowlero is seeking approval from the City to demolish AMF Land Park Lanes, which is a 1960 post-war bowling alley building located in the South Land Park neighborhood of Sacramento. This evaluation considers whether AMF Land Park Lanes is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register). The purpose of this study is to determine whether AMF Land Park Lanes is a historical resource, as defined by CEQA.

This study, including preparation of this Historic Resources Evaluation Report (HRER), was completed in compliance with the requirements established by CEQA and was guided by National Park Service (NPS) Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (NPS 1995), California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources and Guidelines for the Archaeological Research Designs* (OHP 1995, 1991), and Chapter 17 of the City Code.

This section of the report introduces the preparer's qualifications and the study's scope, purpose, location, setting, and methodology. A summary of the regulatory framework for the study, including the evaluation criteria, follows. Next is a review of the historic context relevant to evaluating AMF Land Park Lanes, as well as an assessment of the subject property. Conclusions are provided, followed by bibliographic references. The subject property was documented on California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Forms, which have been appended to this report (Appendix A).

## Qualifications of Personnel

This evaluation was performed by and under the direction of architectural historians who meet and exceed the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Professional Qualification Standards (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 61) for Architectural History and History. SWCA Architectural Historian Lisa Demarais, M.H.P., oversaw the field survey effort, served as project manager, and was the primary author of this report. SWCA Senior Architectural Historian Dan Herrick, M.H.C., contributed to this report as an author and provided oversight and review of all project activities and deliverables.

## Location and Setting

AMF Land Park Lanes is located on Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 035-0034-016 at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, Sacramento, Sacramento County, California (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The property is bounded by developed commercial parcels to the north, 38th Avenue to the south, Freeport Boulevard to the east, and McLaren Avenue Freeport Boulevard Alley to the west. The surrounding setting consists of dense, low-rise, mixed-use development. The subject property setting includes low-density commercial properties to the north and south along Freeport Boulevard, a civil airport (Sacramento Executive Airport) to the east, and single-family residential development to the west, northwest, and southwest.

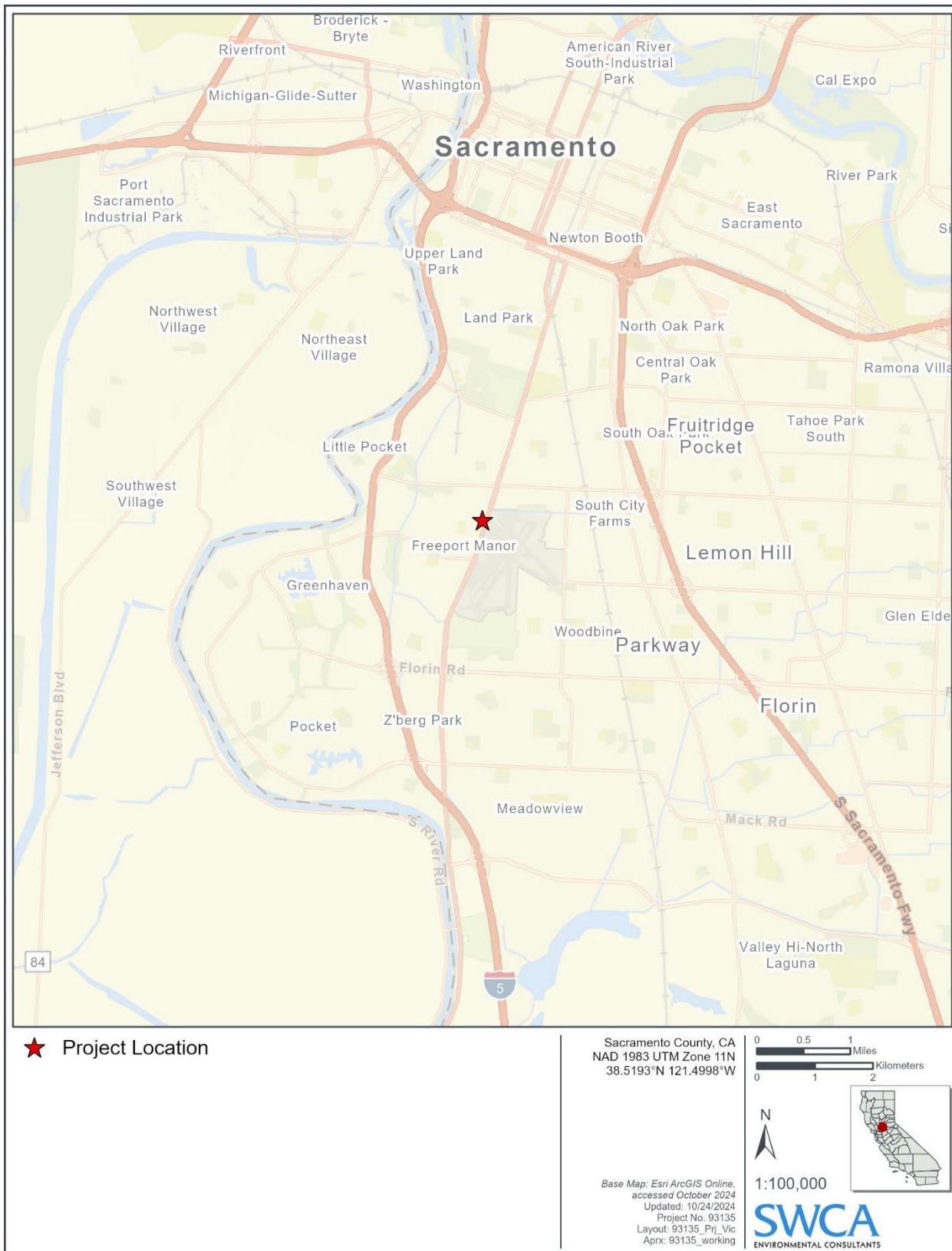


Figure 1. Project vicinity map.



Figure 2. Project location map.

## Methodology

This section outlines the research and field documentation approaches undertaken by SWCA to evaluate AMF Land Park Lanes.

### Literature Review

AMF Land Park Lanes has not been the subject of a previous cultural resources investigation. SWCA performed a review of previous investigations relevant to the history of the subject property to compile historical context and registration requirements for the eligibility assessment. Specifically, SWCA relied upon the following documents:

- “Sacramento City-Wide Historic Context and Standards & Criteria” in *Sacramento Historic District Plans – Final* (Page and Turnbull 2019)
- *Mid-Century Modern in the City of Sacramento Historic Context Statement and Survey Results* (GEI Consultants, Inc. [GEI] and Mead & Hunt, Inc. [Mead & Hunt] 2017)
- “Post WWII Recreation, 1940-1975” in *Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement* (Shannon 2017)

### Archival Research

In addition to the literature review, SWCA conducted archival research to determine whether the property is associated with any historically important persons or events and to establish a developmental history of the property. Repositories and sources included the Sacramento County Assessor, Online Archive of California, California State Railroad Museum Library and Archives, Calisphere, Sacramento Public Library, HistoricAerials.com, Newspapers.com, and Ancestry.com, among other online resources.

### Field Survey

SWCA conducted an intensive-level built environment field survey of AMF Land Park Lanes on October 22, 2024, to document the existing conditions and key characteristics of the property using digital photography. The field survey was conducted under the direction of SWCA Project Architectural / Project Manager Historian Lisa Demarais, M.H.P.

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This regulatory framework section identifies the laws, statutes, guidelines, and regulations that govern the identification, evaluation, and treatment of cultural resources.

### California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires a lead agency to analyze whether historic resources may be adversely impacted by a proposed project. Under CEQA, a “project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment” (California Public Resources Code [PRC] 21084.1). Answering this question is a two-part process: first, the determination must be made as to whether the proposed project involves historic resources; second, if historic resources are present, the proposed project must be analyzed for a potential substantial adverse change in the significance or integrity of the resource.

According to State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5, for the purposes of CEQA, historic resources are:

1. A resource listed in, or formally determined eligible for listing in, the CRHR (PRC 5024.1; 14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] 4850 et seq.);
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC 5020.1(k) or identified as significance in a historic resources survey meeting the requirements of PRC 5024.1(g); and
3. Any building, structure, object, site, or district that the lead agency determines eligible for national, state, or local landmark listing; generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be historically significant (and therefore a historic resource under CEQA) if the resource meets the criteria for listing in the CRHR (as defined in PRC 5024.1; 14 CCR 4852).

According to CEQA, the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined eligible for listing in the CRHR or is not included in a local register or survey shall not preclude the lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource (PRC 5024.1). Pursuant to CEQA, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource may have a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines 15064.5(b)).

## California Register of Historical Resources

Created in 1992 and implemented in 1998, the CRHR is “an authoritative guide in California to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change” (PRC 21083.2 and 21084.1). Certain properties, including those listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Historical Landmarks numbered 770 and higher, are automatically included in the CRHR. Other properties recognized under the California Points of Historical Interest program, identified as significant in historical resources surveys or designated by local landmarks programs, may be nominated for inclusion in the CRHR. According to PRC Section 5024.1(c), a resource, either an individual property or a contributor to a historic district, may be listed in the CRHR if the State Historical Resources Commission determines that it meets one or more of the following criteria, which are modeled on NRHP criteria:

- **Criterion 1:** It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- **Criterion 2:** It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- **Criterion 3:** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- **Criterion 4:** It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Resources nominated to the CRHR must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to convey the reasons for their significance, known as integrity. Aspects of integrity assessed when determining potential eligibility include location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources

The Sacramento Register was created through Title 17 of the City Code, which outlines the City's historic preservation regulations. Criteria for listing on the Sacramento Register is similar to that of the NRHP and CRHR, though it includes cultural resources that may not reach the level of significance needed for listing in the national or state registers. Cultural resources listed in the Sacramento Register are considered landmarks and are listed based on the findings of the City Council. The requirements for listing are as follows:

- I. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state, or the nation;
- II. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in the city's past;
- III. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;
- IV. It represents the work of an important creative individual or master;
- V. It possesses high artistic values; or
- VI. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the city, the region, the state or the nation;

The nominated resource must also have integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association.

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The following sections examine historical themes relevant in considering the potential historical significance of AMF Land Park Lanes. The historic context is divided by significance theme, and each theme is discussed chronologically.

### Development of the City of Sacramento

#### *Nineteenth Century*

Before European colonization, Nisenan and Plains Miwok called the Sacramento area home. Spanish colonization, which primarily occurred along the southern and central coast of California, did not instantly affect the Indigenous populations of the interior of California. The first recorded European expedition into the interior of California occurred in 1808 by Gabriel Moraga. Moraga surveyed the region to find suitable locations for a future mission and named the Sacramento Valley and Sacramento River, after the Spanish word for sacrament. Throughout the next two decades, various travelers entered the Sacramento Valley, but no permanent non-Indigenous settlements were established until 1839.

In 1839 John Sutter, along with a few Hawaiian and European settlers, established the first non-Indigenous permanent settlement—a fort called New Helvetia. The land was granted by the Mexican government, which controlled California at the time after having gained independence from Spain in 1822. Sutter raised horses and cattle and farmed grain and corn. He also built a sawmill at present-day Coloma in El Dorado County, which would lead to the first discovery of gold in California in 1848 (Page & Turnbull 2019:19–20). The resulting Gold Rush spurred massive westward American migration and settlement of California, greatly influencing the broader history of the state and the United States. Thousands of migrants poured into California during the Gold Rush, greatly accelerating its development

(California Department of Conservation 2005; Rice et al. 1994:169). The Gold Rush was a major factor in California's transformation from a sparsely populated western frontier to a center of industry, commerce, and trade. One year after the discovery at Sutter's Mill, nearly 90,000 people had migrated to California in search of gold. As the gateway to the Sierra Nevada and the goldfields of the foothills, Sacramento quickly became a transportation hub and nexus of Gold Rush economic activity (Page & Turnbull 2019:19-20; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

Also in 1848, and shortly after the discovery of gold in California, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and made California a territory of the United States (National Archives 2023). On January 4, 1850, California's first constitutional convention convened, establishing the first 18 counties. Over the succeeding months, additional counties were added, bringing the total to 27 on the day of California's admission to the United States on September 9, 1850. Sacramento County was one of those original counties, with the City of Sacramento its county seat. The City would become the capital of California in 1854, in large part due to the Gold Rush, which had caused massive population growth in the area and established its role as a center of commerce (California State Association of Counties 2019; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

While the primary draw to California in the late 1840s and early 1850s was the insatiable dream of striking it rich in the gold fields, many found the search for gold much more difficult than expected. Many of the people who migrated to the California gold fields, originally from agrarian and business backgrounds, soon realized the real riches lay in establishing enterprises that profited from miners, such as agricultural pursuits (California State Association of Counties 2019). This was true in Sacramento County, which is situated in the northern Central Valley, a region known for its rich agricultural lands. Grain cultivation and grazing dominated land use in the Sacramento area until the turn of the twentieth century when new crops such as citrus fruits and almonds took prominence (Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Amidst the Gold Rush and statehood, Sacramento was under formal development and soon began to take the shape of a true city. In December 1848, John Sutter, Jr. and Sam Brannan hired topographical engineer Captain William H. Warner and Lieutenant William Sherman to survey and layout "Sacramento City." The original city grid consisted of 26 lettered (originally A to Z, today C to Broadway) and 31 numbered (originally 1st to 31st, today Front to Alhambra) streets. Sacramento's city grid was built directly at the base of the American River flood basin, where centuries of Sierra Nevada snowmelt created temporary lakes each spring, well into the 1840s. Sacramento's original townsite was a 5-square-mile area, with each street 80 feet wide (except for Front and M) and each block 320 to 340 feet long. Each block was composed of many lots, and many blocks were divided by 20-foot-wide alleys (Figure 3) (Owens 2013:32–33, 42–43; Hallam 2013:63–64).

Sacramento grew through 1850; however, the population was not stable and remained largely transient aside from the core of merchants and hotel owners. California's population was undoubtedly increasing, but the population of Sacramento grew sluggishly and inconsistently due in part to the transient nature of the early Gold Rush miners, flooding, and fires that destroyed buildings. In September 1849, a destructive fire swept through the business district, destroying several blocks of canvas tent and wood-framed structures, followed by a major flood in January 1850. In 1852 fire again swept through the business district, destroying over 55 blocks of the city. Original buildings in Sacramento were wood frame and canvas, but as fires and floods became a way of life, citizens began to erect buildings of brick and raised the street level, leaving the original street level below grade.

In 1854 Sacramento became the capital of California. This rise in prominence, coupled with the City's strategic location and early commercial importance in the development of California, resulted in Sacramento becoming the western terminus for the first transcontinental railroad, which was constructed starting in 1863 and completed in 1869. The Central Pacific Railroad Company, which later became the

Southern Pacific Railroad and then later the Union Pacific Railroad, was founded by a group of merchants and businessman known as “the Big Four,” who were based in Sacramento, or had strong ties to the region. This development solidified Sacramento as a center for transportation in California, providing immediate links to San Francisco and the growing agricultural hinterlands of the central valleys with the rest of the United States (Owens 2013:48–50; Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Through the 1870s and into the 1900s, growth continued eastward away from the original core along the river embankment (or *embarcadero*) and K Street. The patterns of growth were often reflective of the types of amenities in given neighborhoods, including schools and parks. John Sutter Jr., the primary driving force for the development of Sacramento, had the City laid in a grid pattern with spaces specifically for city plazas. These plaza parks provided residents with publicly accessible spaces within an urban core. In the 1870s, several state government buildings were built in Sacramento, including the extant Capitol Building and the adjacent landscaped park. As growth continued, pushed by the development of streetcars, which connected new neighborhoods with the urban commercial core, the main city grid began to fill. Homes were built in a variety of popular styles such as Greek Revival and Italianate. By the 1890s, speculators had begun to eye land outside of the main grid for development. This led to development of Sacramento’s first residential suburban tracts of Oak Park, Elmhurst, Curtis Park, and East Sacramento (Kremer 2012; Page & Turnbull 2019:21, 27).

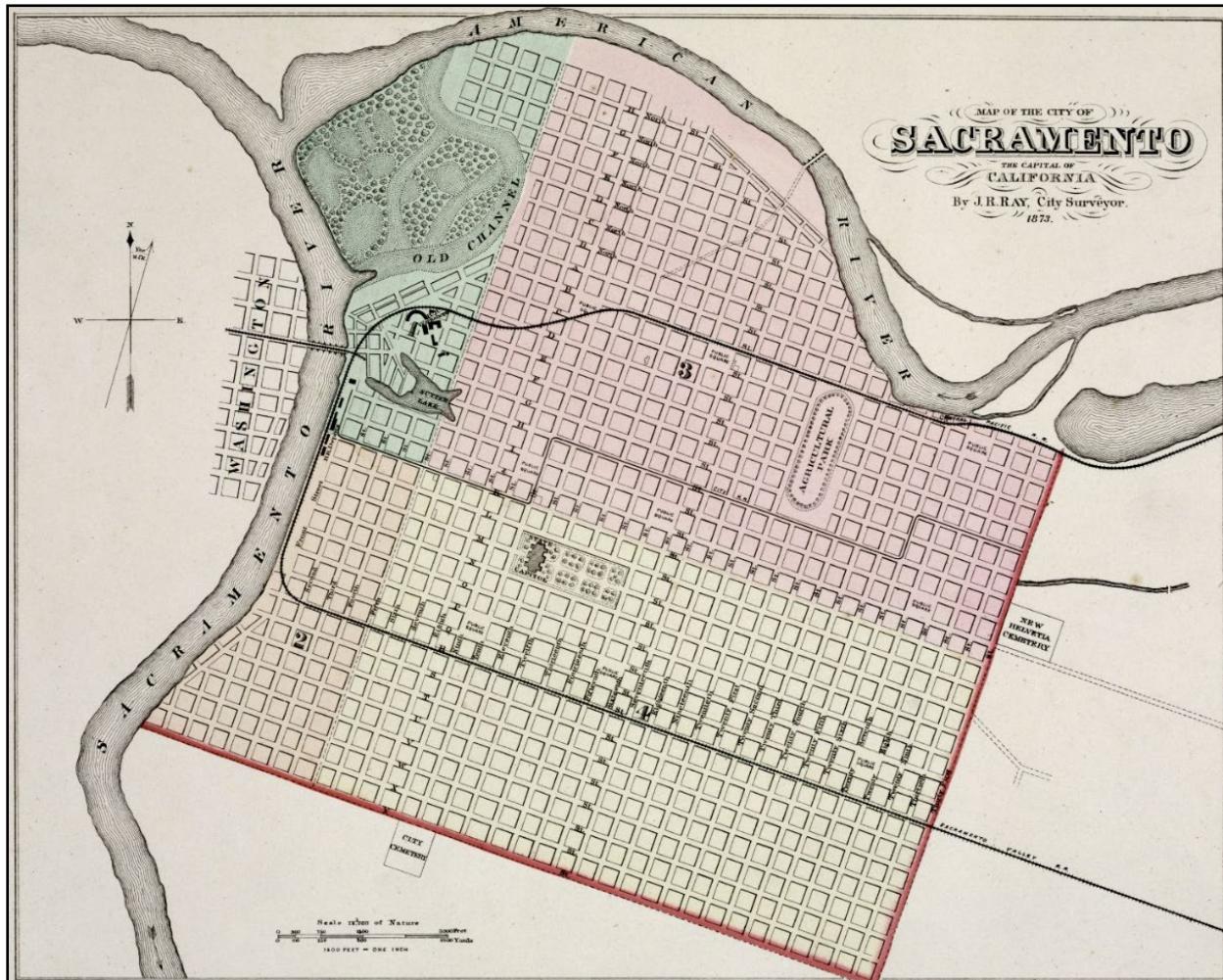


Figure 3. Surveyor's map of the city of Sacramento, California, 1874 (J. R. Ray). Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum.

## Twentieth Century

Sacramento continued to grow during the early to mid-twentieth century with increased residential, commercial, government, infrastructure, and transportation development. The early twentieth century was marked by steady growth and early suburbanization, while Sacramento's development during the post-war period largely followed national trends of continued post-war suburbanization, expansion of the automobile, and late-twentieth century urban renewal, which sought to bring people back to cities that were broadly viewed negatively. Many Americans at the time saw cities as centers of disease and crime. Urban renewal, or urban revitalization, was undertaken across the United States during the 1950s to 1980s (Williams 2013:v, 23–25; Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

In the early twentieth century, residential expansion grew outward from downtown Sacramento to the fringes of the original city limits. These new homes were built in a myriad of newly popular architectural styles such as Prairie and Craftsman styles. Affluent homes were typically built on east–west-aligned streets, while moderately sized homes were constructed on the numbered streets. Ancillary buildings such as stables and cottages for laborers were constructed facing alleys. Several new neighborhoods like Boulevard Park, Winn Park, Newton Booth, and Bungalow Row emerged during this time, largely along streetcar lines. In addition to streetcars, in the early twentieth century, Sacramento developed four electric interurban railroads for passenger service. The service had more frequent railroad stops and were faster than the streetcars. Streetcar service ended in 1947, but some passenger rail service continues. Many new civic buildings were built in downtown Sacramento in the early twentieth century. This new civic construction largely adhered to popular styles at the time, notably Neoclassical Revival and Beaux-Arts Revival. This type of development briefly slowed during the Great Depression but was renewed during and post-World War II. Several military facilities were constructed at McClellan Field, Mather Field, and the Sacramento Army Depot while new state buildings were constructed surrounding Capitol Park (Page & Turnbull 2019:26, 32–33). Pre-war commercial development was largely within downtown and midtown (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-16).

Sacramento underwent many changes in the mid-twentieth century as a direct result of World War II and expansion of the automobile. The economy shifted from primarily agriculture to military, federal and state government, and transportation industries. Alongside the national population, Sacramento saw significant population growth of its own, with an increase from 105,958 in 1940 to 137,572 in 1950. This growing population was also more mobile than ever before, spurring expansion of development outside of Sacramento's downtown core. The growing post-war population spurred a housing shortage and rapid construction of new homes. New post-war residences were most frequently built in Minimal Traditional and Mid-Century Modern styles outside of the core city and in suburban areas (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-4). In 1947 planning for a new freeway system began, marking the beginning of a shift to automobile travel instead of streetcar and rail service. By 1961, the South Sacramento, Elvas, and Capital City Freeways were complete. The city core connected to these routes via surface streets. By 1954, planning for an east–west-oriented freeway was underway (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-13–2-14).

World War II also had a profound effect on the Japanese-American population; more than 7,000 Japanese-American Sacramento residents were forcibly relocated to internment camps during the war, and of those, only 59% returned to the city after the war. During this time, the government instituted the Bracero Program to fill job vacancies left by the removal of Japanese-American citizens with temporary Mexican labor. The program resulted in a shift in the ethnic makeup of Sacramento's labor force (Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

With the increasing availability and affordability of automobiles in the post-war era, most new residents, drawn to Sacramento for its available jobs, began life in the suburbs. For these same reasons, in the

1950s, state government buildings began to be dispersed throughout the city and post-war commercial development was largely focused on areas outside of downtown Sacramento, specifically in areas south, east, and northeast of downtown (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; Page & Turnbull 2019:22, 26–28). New commercial development was focused on independent business alongside major thoroughfares outside of downtown and through or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Some major retailers also left downtown, such as Sears, which moved to a new suburban location in 1956. The City convinced Macy's to construct a new downtown store, which was completed in 1963, but this did not have the desired effect of inspiring new downtown commercial development (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2–19).

Like the automobile and World War II, urban renewal had a profound impact across Sacramento during the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1950s, the City began efforts of urban renewal, starting with the West End, Sacramento's skid row, through the newly created Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA). Subsequent plans undertaken in the 1960s to 1970s also involved redeveloping the Capitol Mall, Alkali Flat, and Oak Park areas. The roots of urban renewal date to the 1940s. At the federal level, the Housing Act of 1949 provided federal subsidies for local redevelopment projects and gave local agencies the power to acquire parcels through eminent domain for redevelopment, and the Housing Act of 1954 coined the term urban renewal. At the state level, urban renewal dates to the 1945 Community Development Act. The movement was a reaction to the economic decline in cities across the country as commercial and residential development largely moved to the suburbs. Cities at the time were broadly viewed negatively. Sacramento's West End was seen as a center of vice, disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency. Ultimately, urban renewal resulted in mass demolition of buildings that displaced thousands of residents and businesses in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-7–2-8; Page & Turnbull 2019:28, 30; Williams 2013:25). Despite the renewal efforts, the suburban model for development with sprawling expansions of residential neighborhoods, strip malls, and shopping centers would continue to define Sacramento and the surrounding region during the twentieth century, as evident in present-day development patterns.

## **SOUTH LAND PARK**

The project area lies within South Land Park, which was annexed in the 1950s and today is bounded by Sutterville Road to the north, Florin Avenue to the south, Freeport Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the west. The area is known for its “rolling hills, mature native oak trees, and curving streets” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-35). The Land Park area, including South Land Park, was named for William Land, Sacramento's mayor from 1898 to 1899, who made his fortune with hotels in downtown Sacramento. Before it was Land Park, the area was part of New Helvetia, an 11-square-league Mexican land grant given to John Sutter in 1841 by then-governor Juan B. Alvarado (Isidro 2005:7–13, 18; Hoffman 1862). Development during this period was largely north of Sutterville Road in the town of Sutterville, within present-day Land Park but north of South Land Park. Early sketches show Sutterville as a burgeoning community as early as 1846 and include a brickyard, carpenter, blacksmith, and several saloons by 1847. Sutterville Brewery was built on the south side of Sutterville Road for Robert H. Vance in 1853, within the northernmost part of South Land Park. The brewery was demolished in 1853 and was known as Sutterville's last remaining building (Whittle 2009; Isidro 2005:9). By 1885, the entire Sutter land grant had been divided into many tracts ranging from 10 to over 1,000 acres and sold to many different property owners (Shepherd 1885).

The first homes in South Land Park were built as early as 1902, at the southwest corner of present-day Sutterville Road and Freeport Boulevard, and several more homes were built by 1907 (U.S. Geological Survey 1902, 1907). The Mead Family, which built residences during this time, is largely attributed to developing the area. In the 1940s, after the economic downturn of the Great Depression, developers began larger-scale projects in South Land Park, though there was a pause during World War II. Since the 1940s, hundreds of homes have been constructed in South Land Park, and Freeport Boulevard has become a busy

shopping district. The South Land Park Hills Historic District alone features 49 residences built by developer Joseph Eichler from 1955 to 1956, known for his non-discriminatory housing policies during segregation. By the early 1970s, construction of Interstates 5 and 80 was complete, providing better access to South Land Park and further solidifying the importance of the automobile and suburbanization in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-14, 2-35–2-36; *Sacramento City Express* 2024). Today, the neighborhood continues to retain its suburban qualities with post-war single-family residences and commercial corridors dotted with low-density shopping centers and strip malls.

## Bowling and Bowling Alleys in Sacramento

The game of bowling, and its variations of target bowling (bocce, lawn bowls, etc.) and pin bowling, have ancient and widespread roots with early variations having been practiced in Egypt in the sixth century, Polynesia, and elsewhere. Modern bowling in the United States, however, evolved from traditions brought over by European immigrants and settlers, primarily from Germany and other parts of northern Europe. The earliest portrayal of the game in the United States was in Washington Irving's 1819 book *Rip Van Winkle*, which depicted characters playing an early variation of the game known as ninepins. Over the following decades, bowling became increasingly popular, resulting in the construction of indoor lanes in New York and other cities with large German populations, including Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and others (United States Bowling Conference 2024).

With the discovery of gold in California at Sutter's Mill on the American River in 1848, the ensuing Gold Rush lured thousands of people from all over the world, including the eastern United States, as well as western Europe. Throughout the mining camps and emerging towns and centers, drinking and gambling were often the most ubiquitous forms of entertainment and recreation with saloons and gambling halls being constructed from the ports of San Francisco up into the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada, earning early California an overall reputation for "moral laxity" (Khoury 2012). Gambling games varied, ranging from cards to bullfights, boxing and races, to bowling and billiards. Bowling was particularly popular during the Gold Rush with many saloons and gambling halls constructing adjoining bowling alleys as an added amenity for patrons. In an 1851 letter written by Dame Shirley (Shirley and Russell 1922), the wife of a mining camp doctor, to her sister, she wrote:

The rolling on the bowling alley never leaves off for ten consecutive minutes at any time during the entire twenty-four hours. It is a favorite amusement of the mines; and the only difference that Sunday makes is that it never leaves off for one minute.

As the launching point into the gold fields and mining camps of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 1850s Sacramento featured several saloons, billiard rooms, gambling halls, and bowling alleys. One of the earliest advertised bowling alleys was the Central Bowling Alley, located at No.51 J Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets, which boasted four 70-foot lanes that were constructed "in the most substantial manner" and a bar "supplied with the most choice liquors of all kinds, and the finest flavored cigars . . ." (*Daily California Statesman* 1855; *The Sacramento Bee* 1857). Many other bowling alleys were located throughout the central portion of the city, located in adjoining buildings or within the basements of saloons, which often featured billiards, shooting galleries, dance halls, and stages for live music. One such place was called "The New Corner," which was in the basement of the Morse Building, which is still standing in Old Sacramento at 1025-1031 2nd Street (*The Sacramento Bee* 1866). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the game also had popularity outside of the saloons and gambling halls as a simple form of recreation, with alleys constructed in upper class social clubs, as well as the construction of lanes by the Sacramento Athletic Club and the Sacramento Young Men's Christian Association as a form of recreation alongside gymnastics, fitness, and other forms of sport alongside intellectual and spiritual pursuits (*The Sacramento Union* 1887). Wealthy individuals also constructed their own personal bowling alleys within their grand mansions and estates within Sacramento and the surrounding area. One of the

most notable was that of Adolph Heilbron, a German cattle rancher and landowner, who constructed his grand Italianate mansion at 704 O Street; the still extant residence was listed on the NRHP in 1976 (*The Sacramento Bee* 1892; Price 1975). Despite this proliferation of bowling as a more popular form of recreation, the majority of alleys and lanes continued to be in the setting of saloons, bars, and German-owned beer gardens well into the early twentieth century (*The Sacramento Bee* 1896; Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:187).



**Figure 4. Early bowling alley in Sacramento, 1915 (International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame 2024).**

As Sacramento expanded with the development of early streetcar suburbs in the early twentieth century, so did new recreation halls. In Oak Park and East Sacramento, new bowling alleys were developed as the sport continued to proliferate within popular culture. New bowling leagues were founded and tournaments were held at locations such as the Sequoia Bowling Alley on 909 K Street, drawing in teams from around the Sacramento area to regularly compete for a variety of prizes (*The Sacramento Star* 1910). Emerging as its own sport, local bowling scores were often increasingly published in local papers under the sports section. While the sport had previously been exclusive to men, women and youth bowlers became increasingly common during the 1920s and the sport was marketed to a broader, albeit Caucasian, demographic with new leagues, tournaments, and other events (*The Sacramento Union* 1931; Shannon 2017:3).

Bowling had been long associated with drinking establishments and the sale of alcohol; however, the enactment of prohibition in 1920 quickly changed the game. Many of the alleys associated with taverns and saloons were closed, while some bowling alley owners reorganized their business model to focus on the sport itself, decoupling from associations with alcohol and creating a more family-friendly pastime (Riess 2015:187). During this period, the common naming conventions of bowling alleys changed, often substituting the words like bowl or lane instead of alley. Rules and standards of the game and the distinctly American 10-pin variant were more codified and regulated by organizations like the American Bowling Congress, and new dry purpose-built bowling alleys were constructed throughout the United

States, bringing the sport into the mainstream (Riess 2015:187; Shannon 2017:1–3). Despite the proliferation of bowling into popular culture as part of prohibition, a more widespread expansion of bowling alleys did not occur until its repeal, allowing for drinking to again become part of the bowling pastime, establishing it as a major outlet for socializing and recreation in communities, particularly for young men (Riess 2015:188). Unlike the bowling alleys before, large new bowling facilities with multiple lanes were constructed under the new specifications of the sport with bowling as the primary activity and not an added amenity as a barroom game. Just before World War II, there were an estimated 12 million bowlers in the United States, and the sport continued to grow in popularity steadily over the 1930s through World War II (Shannon 2017:1-4).

Many of these new post-Prohibition “bowling palaces” were constructed in Sacramento during the 1930s and early 1940s, including Capitol Bowl at 1415 L Street (1939), North Bowl at 1721 Del Paso Boulevard (1941), and Alhambra Bowl at 1229 Alhambra Boulevard (1942) (*The Sacramento Union* 1939, 1941; *The Sacramento Bee* 1942a). These facilities were composed in a Streamlined or Moderne style (Figure 5 and Figure 6) architecture with prominent marquee, and often featured a dozen or so lanes, air conditioning, restaurant corners, cocktail lounges, league meeting rooms, locker rooms, spectator seating areas, and occasionally billiard rooms (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942a).



**Figure 5. Advertisement for the Capitol Bowl, 1939 (*The Sacramento Union*).**



**Figure 6. Image of Alhambra Bowl from a 1942 flyer (Sacramento Public Library).**

During World War II, bowling alleys in Sacramento remained open although construction of new alleys stalled. An exception was on military bases in the area, where bowling lanes were installed as a form of recreation for the servicemen (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942b). Approximately 4,500 bowling lanes were constructed on military bases across the United States during World War II and more women's leagues were established amongst civilians. It was not until the post-war period that the expansion of bowling as a sport reached a new level of popularity outside of military bases. The 1950s and 1960s are often considered the golden age of bowling with new purpose-built bowling facilities constructed throughout the rapidly expanding post-war landscape of American cities and towns (Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:188). Bowling was an important aspect of recreation in post-war America, with an estimated 20 million bowlers across the country in 1948. A one-lane bowling alley was even installed in the White House by President Truman in 1947. Many of these post-war bowling alleys had restaurants, meeting or banquet rooms, and lounges that served as places to socialize or gather local clubs, groups, and organizations. Most often, they were constructed in Mid-Century Modern architectural styles, with the Googie style being most notable, and eye-catching signage, such as the one at Fireside Lanes in Sacramento (Figure 7), was a key design element (Shannon 2017:1, 4, 20-22; Pope Studios 1960).



Figure 7. Fireside Lanes, 1960 (Pope Studios). Courtesy of the Sacramento Public Library.

Sacramento was no exception with new modern and larger bowling alleys constructed throughout the expanding reaches of the city's growing suburbs in the post-war era. New bowling alleys included Sacramento Bowl located at 917 6th Street (1948), Town and Country Bowl on Fulton Avenue (1956) South Bowl at 5005 Stockton Boulevard (1958), El Rancho Bowl at 900 West Capitol Avenue in West Sacramento (1959), Country Club Lanes at 2600 Watt Avenue (1960), Cordova Lanes in Rancho Cordova (1960), Fireside Lanes (1960) at 7901 Auburn Boulevard (see Figure 7), and Land Park Bowl at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (1960) (*The Sacramento Union* 1956, 1958, 1959, 1960a; Pope Studios 1960).

By the 1950s, bowling was solidified as an American pastime suitable for families, a stark difference from its early association with gambling. New facilities, typically composed in some variation of the Mid-Century Modern style, also featured significantly more lanes, new technologies, and amenities. Bowling centers with 40 to 60 lanes became most common in the United States, and new technologies such as air conditioning, automatic pin setters, and underground ball returns became widespread. In Sacramento, smaller 20- to 40-lane bowling alleys were most common. Like bowling alley exteriors, interiors were also often lavishly designed with colorful carpets, murals, and other decorative details. These types of bowling alleys were built rapidly across the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, and substantial building costs over one million dollars were not uncommon. Bowling center amenities continued to expand. Cocktail lounges and meeting rooms were still common, but instructional programs, live musical performances, coffee shops, concessions, childcare facilities, and pro-equipment shops also became common offerings. Many bowling alleys of this era were also open 24 hours a day to further attract diverse clientele. Some bowling alleys even offered laundry and grocery shopping services to attract housewives during daytime hours. The number of children bowling also substantially increased in

the post-war era with nearly 400,000 members of the Junior Congress bowling association in 1959 (Riess 2015:188; Shannon 2017:3–5).

Because of racial segregation, the bowling centers of this era were typically restricted to white Americans and the clientele was largely suburban, though with the encouragement of the National Bowling Association, some bowling alleys provided specific times for people of color to bowl. More often, older outdated bowling alleys were purchased specifically for use by persons of color (Shannon 2017:5). Of the bowling alleys constructed in Sacramento during this period, one of the most notable was the El Rancho Bowl (now Capitol Bowl), which is believed to be the first racially integrated bowling alleys in the region, allowing for patrons of any race to partake and form leagues at the facility (Saizan 2014). Another notable bowling alley was Country Club Lanes, which was the largest and most celebrated of these facilities during this period. In addition to the wide array of amenities, the building featured iconic Mid-Century Modern architecture with some Googie-inspired elements with its broad parabolic entrance canopies (Figure 8; *The Sacramento Union* 1960a).



Figure 8. Advertisement for the opening of Country Club Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1960a).

By the 1970s, with increased forms of recreation and entertainment available to the public, the popularity of bowling started to wane. Bowling leagues became less popular and many bowling establishments were forced to close. As women entered the workforce in greater numbers, daytime customers became fewer. Many bowling alleys were demolished during this period as land values increased. This trend would continue in part throughout the remainder of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. As part of this, many of the larger bowling centers built additional amenities to attract patrons, such as arcades. The character-defining features of many early bowling alleys were removed as they were purchased and updated in the 1970s and 1980s (Shannon 2017:5–6). New bowling alleys constructed at this later date were often within the setting of larger gaming facilities or bars, such as Punch Bowl Social in downtown Sacramento, offering only a few lanes as a single amenity and novelty rather than the primary form of recreation.

## Mid-Century Modern Architecture

As discussed in the previous section, bowling alleys of the post-war era, like AMF Land Park Lanes, were typically built in Mid-Century Modern styles. Modernism emerged as a popular architectural style and aesthetic philosophy throughout the United States during the early-to-mid twentieth century, reaching its

heyday in the post-World War II era. Modernism was greatly influenced by industrialization during and after World War II, which made new building materials such as glass and steel more common and affordable. Modernism markedly diverged from past architectural styles with its function over ornamentation ethos. Several Modernist-style offshoots developed during the twentieth century, including Googie, International, and Late Moderne (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1–3-10). Though many of these styles had key differences, they typically shared the following features:

**Form** – overall geometric massing and simple, clean lines; emphasis on horizontality, though not with unrelieved flat planes; in multi-story structures, interior floors are often demarcated on the exterior with an inset first floor and cantilevered planes to indicate upper floors.

**Structure** – exposed structural system typically using concrete, steel, or wood materials, and some concrete block or masonry for smaller structures.

**Roof** – flat or low-pitches, often with deep overhangs/eaves emphasizing horizontality; some with large sweeping or folded forms.

**Exterior and interior walls** – contrasting materials and textures or smooth, blank walls typically filling entire structural “bays”; exterior walls and openings in offset planes along horizontal lines; use of exterior screens or grills that shelter window and door openings, usually in concrete or metal.

**Windows** – custom windows (ribbon, picture, corner); large expanses of glass arranged in horizontal groupings of vertically oriented sashes, with glazing often filling entire structural bays; windows may be located in clerestory, between solid walls and eaves.

**Integrated site planning and landscapes designs** – sliding glass doors, integrated indoor and outdoor private living spaces, courtyards with screens, walls, berms, or plantings that provide demarcation between private and public outdoor spaces; plantings generally have a horizontal orientation relative to sun angles and topography (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-5–3-6).

During the war, material rations and a moratorium on housing construction in the United States stagnated the construction of Modernist architecture. After the war, with these limitations removed, the economy in a period of prosperity, and the population expanding, there was a construction boom that favored Modern design principles and features. Modernist architecture of the post-war era is referred to under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modernism. A variety of property types were newly constructed in the Mid-Century Modern style in the post-war era, including residential, institutional, commercial, and educational buildings (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1–3-6, 3-9–3-10). Common features of these buildings included “cantilevered roofs, flat or shed roof forms, deep overhanging eaves, canted and large expansive windows, and a variety of incorporated materials, including wood, stone, brick, stucco, plastic, metal, and concrete” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-9–3-10). Styles under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modern architecture included Modern Ranch, Contemporary, Commercial Modern, Brutalism, and more (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-10–3-15).

During the 1950s to 1970s, Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture was often influenced by the earlier International style. On the opposite end of the spectrum, many commercial buildings in the 1950s and 1960s, were built in the striking Googie (or Exaggerated Modern) style. While the International style, and Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture influenced by the style, was defined by crisp clean lines, flat roofs, horizontality, and limited ornamentation, the Googie style was dramatic and striking. Common features of Googie-style architecture included exaggerated non-linear rooflines, irregular

massing and asymmetrical façades, colorful accents, prominent signage, neon lights, and starburst motifs (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-8–3-9, 3-12). Key commercial corridors in Sacramento include Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Freeport Boulevard, Broadway, Del Paso Boulevard, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and Capitol Avenue. Examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture, such as the Loan/Chase Bank (4701 Freeport Boulevard) (Figure 9) and Gunther’s Ice Cream (2801 Franklin Boulevard), can be found within these areas (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:1-6, 2-13). The South Land Park Hills (Eichler) Historic District is composed of 49 Mid-Century Modern homes (*Sacramento City Press* 2024).



Figure 9. Loan/Chase Bank Building, 2017 (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017).

## EVALUATION OF AMF LAND PARK LANES

This section catalogues the efforts of SWCA to assess AMF Land Park Lanes and includes a discussion of the subject property's developmental history, a property description, photographs of the property, and the evaluation of eligibility under CRHR and Sacramento Register criteria.

### Property History

AMF Land Park Lanes was constructed in 1960. A review of historical aerial photographs of the subject property from 1964 through 2022 shows the footprint of the building has remain unchanged during that period (National Environmental Title Research 2024; Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). The

bowling alley was first mentioned in available historical newspaper articles in August 1960, which depicted its interior (Figure 10) and reads:

A pre engineered, 148 foot [sic] clear span, described by James Winston of the Winston Steel Works as the widest of its type in a rigid frame building in Northern California, has been erected in Land Park Lanes. Plans call for the 32 lane [sic] bowling alley, restaurant and bar on Freeport Boulevard, opposite the Sacramento Municipal Airport, to be completed in about six weeks. Owned by the Gonzo Sakai family of Clarksburg, Yolo County, the \$600,000 development will be operated by Dave and Dale Hanna. The steel span was engineered and built by the Winston plants in Sacramento and Stockton, San Joaquin County (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).

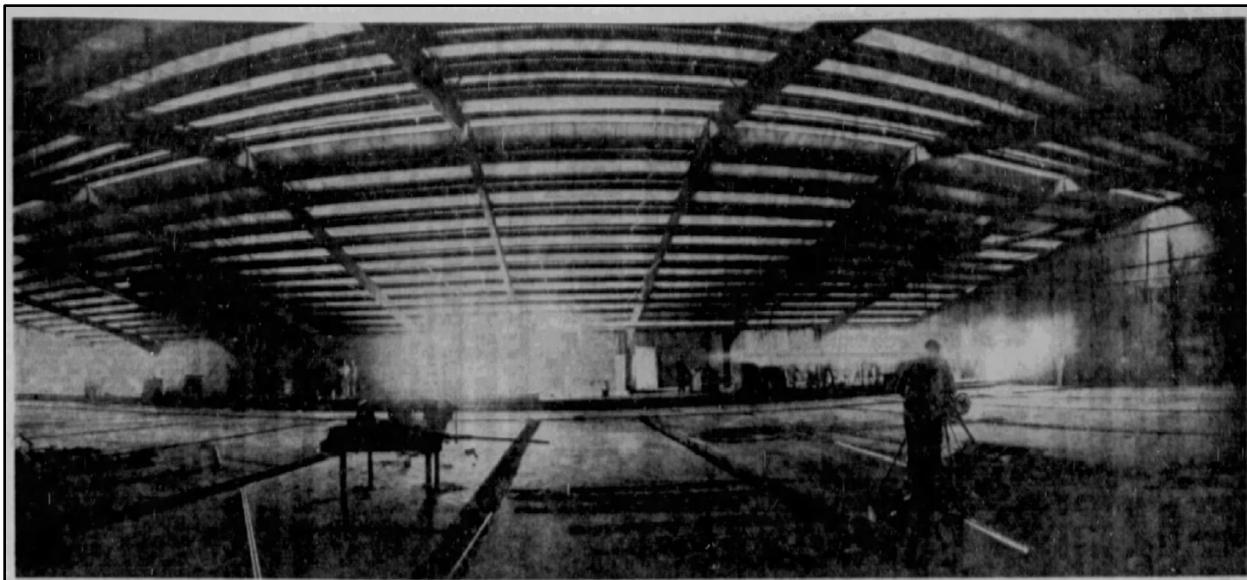


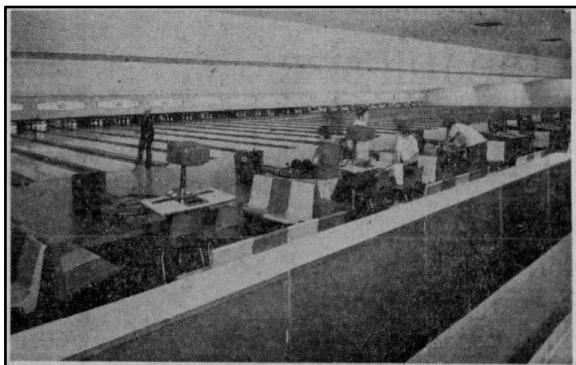
Figure 10. Interior view of Land Park Lanes under construction (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).

Winston Steel Works, named after owner James Winston and founded in 1946, was a local producer of pre-fabricated steel warehouse and commercial buildings, with plants in Sacramento and Stockton. Winston had decades of experience as a designer, draftsman, engineer, estimator, and contractor and was a member of the Society of American Military Engineers, California Society of Professional Engineers, and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. The builder used cranes to assemble poured concrete slabs and welded pre-engineered steel elements to construct its buildings—a common technique that Winston Steel Works used to construct buildings throughout Sacramento and that was likely also used to erect AMF Land Park Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7). Winston Steel Works produced many pre-fabricated buildings in the Sacramento area and throughout Northern California, as well as a few buildings farther east and abroad. Most notably, Winston Steel Works built its own plant at 4700 West Capitol Avenue in Sacramento; a highway maintenance station in the Auburn area, which included a warehouse, office, garage, fuel house, and pump house; Palm Market in Auburn; a boiler house at St. Joseph's Hospital in Stockton; an exhibit building for the Inter-Mountain Fair; Hi Land Market at Watt Avenue and I Street in North Highlands, Sacramento; a storage building for General Mills in Lodi; a metal shop at Folsom Dam; a bowling alley in Nevada City; and two buildings at two uranium mills in Argentina (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7; 1954:45, 1959:23, 1962:4, 1957:31; *Nevada County Nugget* 1961:1; *Auburn Journal* 1957:15; *Lodi News-Sentinel* 1961:21; *Stockton Evening and Sunday Record* 1955:8). The company filed bankruptcy in 1964 and appears to have closed at that time (*The Sacramento Bee* 1964:65).

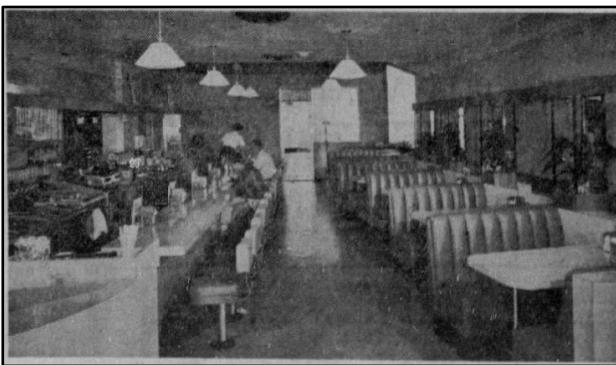
A grand opening advertisement for the bowling alley, which opened early November 1960, used the name Land Park Bowl and boasted Brunswick automatic pinsetters, subsurface ball returns, a nursery for children, a cocktail lounge, and a coffee shop featuring “excellent food” at modest prices. The bowling alley was also advertised as open 24 hours a day. Within the ad, a rendering of the building’s exterior shows its original appearance (Figure 11); several interior photographs were also included (Figure 12 and Figure 13) (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23). The earliest available photograph of the building’s exterior (Figure 14), from just before its opening, shows the original signage and indicates not all the exterior features in the rendering of the grand opening advertisement were included in the building’s final design (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17). Based on this historical photograph, several original features have been altered since 1960. The original operators of the bowling alley were David Hanna, Dale Hanna, and Earl Warren (*The Sacramento Union* 1960b:35). In the 1960s and 1970s, the facility also offered bowling classes, leagues, and events for singles and seniors (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:82, 1976:40, 1969:28; Sheppard 1973:30). In the 1960s, the bowling alley suffered several ill-fated events—two robberies and two fires—and in 1974, the bowling alley was sold to Brunswick Corporation, which had previously operated the establishment under a lease (*The Sacramento Bee* 1961:32, 1966a:1, 1966b:32, 1968:64, 1974:46). The building continued to be operated as a bowling alley until its recent closure in March 2024 due to extensive damage to the building’s interior (Walike 2024).



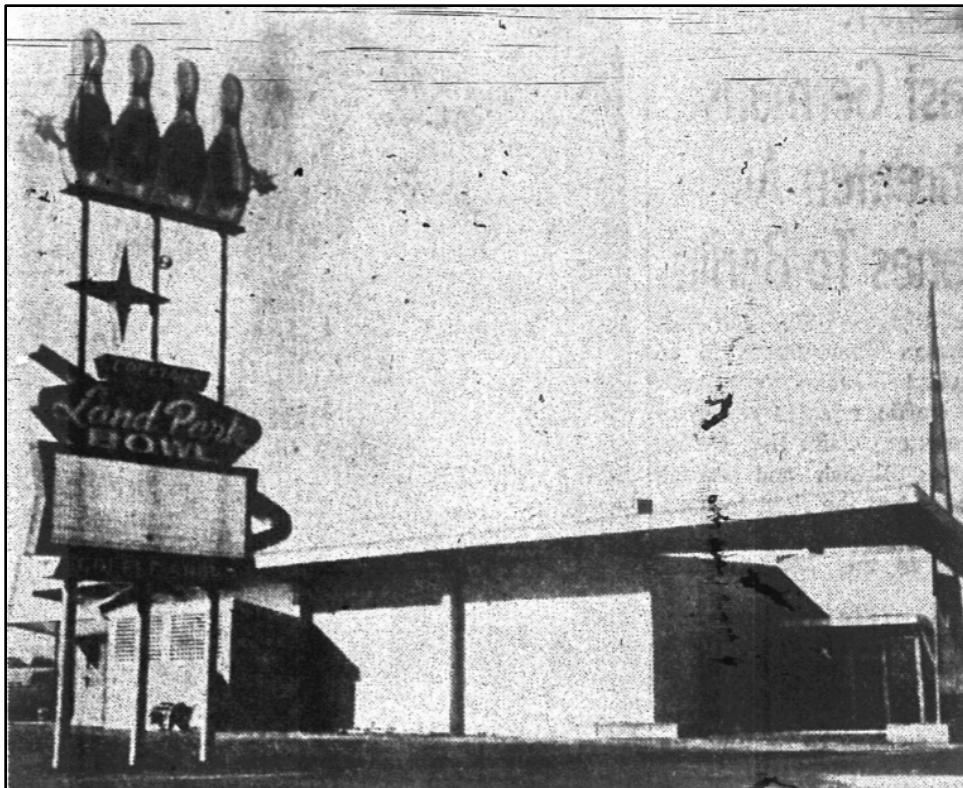
**Figure 11.** Part of the Land Park Bowl grand opening advertisement, showing an exterior rendering of Land Park Bowl (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).



**Figure 12. Bowling lanes at Land Park Bowl**  
(*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).



**Figure 13. Coffee shop at Land Park Bowl**  
(*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).



**Figure 14. Land Park Bowl, 1960** (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17).

## Existing Conditions

AMF Land Park Lanes is a single-story 28,756 square-foot Mid-Century Modern commercial/recreation building (Figure 15) with a roughly L-shaped plan within a 110,207-square-foot rectangular parcel (Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). The entire parcel surrounding the building is paved with asphalt. The building has a concrete slab foundation and is of concrete construction. The building features a low-pitch side-gable roof with a shed roof extension on the south half of the east façade, creating a subtle folded plat roof profile at select elevations (Figure 16). The overhanging eaves of the roof profile

are varied from moderate overhang to none depending on the façade (Figure 16–Figure 18). The primary (east) façade of the building is dominated by a large, L-shaped decorative awning that protrudes from the roofline and has a large cut-out opening over the building's entrance, reducing its functionality. The decorative awning has a strong linear and geometric form. There is a large, triangular steel sculpture north of the main entry doors, reminiscent of an antenna. The entrance is composed of non-historic aluminum-framed and glazed glass double doors. A secondary single-leaf door with a single-lite transom and picture window are at the southern end of the east façade. Adjacent is a protruding volume constructed of concrete masonry unit blocks with louvered venting and a shed canopy supported by steel poles. The primary façade also has Mid-Century Modern style starburst motifs and the word "BOWL," but these are painted on and not architectural ornamentation (see Figure 15). The starburst motifs and lettering were also recently added circa 2015 (Google Earth 2014, 2015). A large, freestanding non-historic sign with a changeable marquee is east of the building, within the property's parking lot. The permanent portions of the sign read "AMF Bowling Co." and "Snack Bar" (see Figure 15). A small non-historic sign reading "AMF Bowling Co." is on the north façade (see Figure 18). There are additional sets of steel and glass double doors on the north and south façades (see Figure 16 and Figure 18). Each façade also features interspaced steel pilasters.



**Figure 15. East (primary) façade; view facing west.**



**Figure 16. South façade; view facing north.**



**Figure 17. West (left) and south (right) façades; view facing northeast.**



**Figure 18. North façade; view facing south.**

## Observed Alterations

Based on a review of various documents and source materials related to the subject property, as well as the existing conditions observed during the site visit to the property in October 2024 and several public photographs included in the property's Google listing (Google 2024), the AMF Land Park Lanes building and surrounding property are known to have undergone several changes and alterations, including:

- Reconfiguration of the original entrance and installation of the current aluminum fenestration;
- Replacement of other doors and select windows throughout the façades;
- Replacement of the original roof with current metal seam roofing;
- Improvements to interior spaces, including partial replacement of the original ceiling with a fiberglass tile drop-ceiling, installation of newer televisions and audio systems, installation of new signage by amenities, reconfiguration of the coffee shop, and replacement of the coffee shop kiosk desk; and
- Replacement of the original "Land Park Bowl" freestanding neon sign and marquee.

## Evaluation Considerations

Although developed for the City of Los Angeles, SWCA used the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context (Shannon 2017) theme of Post-World War II Recreation (1940–1975) and its sub-theme Bowling Centers (1949–1970), in combination with Sacramento-specific development and history of bowling contexts, to guide the evaluation of AMF Land Park Lanes for CRHR and Sacramento Register listing. Upon review, the eligibility standards and character-defining features for evaluating properties under these themes are largely applicable to evaluations of similar properties in other urban centers of California. SurveyLA

outlines the following areas of significance, features, and standards for evaluating post-World War II bowling alleys:

**Areas of Significance:** Post WWII bowling alleys/centers may be significant in the areas of Commerce, Recreation, and/or Architecture.

**Period of Significance:** 1949–1969

**Property Type:** Commercial/Recreation – Bowling Center

**Property Type Description:** They are large, stand-alone one-story buildings, typically surrounded by sizeable parking lots. He [sic] center typically featured eye-catching and modern architecture, design, and signage. Bowling centers typically contained bowling, dining, and drinking establishments. Modern materials including the use of steel, concrete, and glass. Modern design elements (e.g., cantilevered roof, sharp lines, sweeping angles) and futuristic or cosmic details (e.g., starbursts, boomerangs).

**Eligibility Standards:**

- Was developed during the period of significance as a neighborhood or regional bowling center.
- Present appearance resembles the original appearance and retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its historical association.

**Character-Defining Features:**

- Retains most of the essential physical and character-defining features
- Played a significant role in the social and/or cultural history of the neighborhood or region
- Is an excellent example of the type
- Is also a good to excellent example of its architectural style and the work of a noted architect/designer
- Modern design elements (e.g., cantilevered roof, sharp lines, sweeping angles) and futuristic or cosmic details (e.g., starbursts, boomerangs)
- Large-scale, colorful signs, frequently in neon
- Associated architectural styles may include Googie, Mid-Century Modern, Late Moderne, and Tiki/Polynesian

**Integrity Considerations:**

- Should retain integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, and association
- Extant post-war bowling centers are now rare; therefore, a greater degree of alteration or fewer character defining features may be acceptable
- Some design features may have been modified, altered, or replaced
- Adjacent setting may have changed (Shannon 2017:21-22)

## Evaluation of Eligibility

SWCA carefully considered whether AMF Land Park Lanes possesses historical significance under any CRHR or Sacramento Register criteria and historical integrity under the seven aspects of integrity. As the eligibility criteria for both registers is analogous, eligibility is considered concurrently, below.

### **Criteria 1/I**

AMF Land Park Lanes is not significantly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history under CRHR Criterion 1 and Sacramento Register Criterion I. While the bowling alley was part of a broader trend of the growing popularity of bowling in the mid-twentieth century and the proliferation of new bowling alleys throughout the United States during that period, AMF Land Park Lanes was one of hundreds of mid-century bowling alleys built across the United States and one of many built in the Sacramento area during this period, of which more characteristic and influential examples exist. The subject property also did not have an influence on the development of bowling or patterns of development relating to bowling, which was one of the earliest forms of recreation in Sacramento and the surrounding region. Furthermore, the subject building was one of the later bowling alleys constructed in area during this post-war “Golden Age” of bowling. The property also did not have an influence on the broader development of South Land Park and, on its own, does not characterize the commercial development of this area. In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not a good representation of the themes and period it is associated with, indicating the associations do not rise to the threshold of historical significance. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under Criteria 1/I.

### **Criteria 2/II**

There is no evidence that the AMF Land Park Lanes has an important association with any person or persons who made significant contributions to history at the local, state, or national level. Research did not reveal any notable figures specifically associated with the bowling alley, and research did not indicate the potential for significant associations in this regard. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2 and Sacramento Register Criterion II.

### **Criteria 3/III, IV, and V**

Constructed in 1960, the AMF Land Park Lanes building is composed in the Mid-Century Modern style. Although the building was originally designed and rendered with many hallmarks of the style—full-height glazing entrance system, flagstone cladding, and L-shaped columns integrated into a pronounced folded plate roofline—what was constructed in the building’s original form was notably reduced in detail, creating a simpler and more commonplace characterization of the style (see Figure 14). Furthermore, AMF Land Park Lanes formerly had a distinct, lavish sign characteristic of Mid-Century Modern commercial properties and typical of post-war bowling alleys; however, this sign is no longer extant. Outside of the L-shaped decorative awning and the triangular structure at the entrance, the building currently lacks any characteristic Mid-Century Modern features. Additionally, the non-extant sign was the only notable characteristic of the original design that represented broader themes of architecture and design regarding both the Mid-Century Modern style and post-war bowling alley design. Due to the removal of this feature and other alterations found throughout the building, the current building is essentially a simple box form with simple Modern-style elements at the entrance. Overall, in its current condition, the subject property does not embody the Mid-Century Modern style, particularly within the context of South Land Park and Sacramento, which features a notable collection of Mid-Century Modern resources that better embody the style and its characteristics.

As an example of the post-war bowling alley property type, the subject property does not appear to rise to a level of significance. Although these post-war bowling alleys are becoming increasingly rare, several examples exist within the Sacramento area that better reflect the characteristics of the typology, the most notable of which is the extant Country Club Lanes building, which was the largest and most celebrated bowling alley of the period, complete with amenities and architectural details that fully embody the typology and this era in bowling alley design. By comparison, the subject building, particularly in its altered state, is a typical and lackluster example of this typology and does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria.

There is no known architect for the property; though, its simple design indicates its engineer and builder, Winston Steel Works, was likely also responsible for the design. Winston Steel Works has not had a profound influence on the history of architecture, design, or engineering; research indicates the company only ever produced pre-fabricated buildings using well-established construction and assembly techniques. The steel span roof structure was, at its time of construction, believed by Winston Steel Works to be the largest in Northern California, but it was not a new feat of engineering, as large steel span roof systems have been common in California and the United States since the post-war era. The engineering of the building was also pre-fabricated and not unique. Many such roof systems dating to the mid-century period also exist throughout Northern California, and while AMF Land Parks Lanes may have had one of the largest in Northern California for a time, this would have been a brief and/or very marginal accolade not reaching the threshold of historical significance. As such, the subject property lacks historical significance for its engineering. Similarly, the building does not appear to be a significant work of a master architect or builder.

In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not historically significant for its engineering or as the work of a master architect or builder, nor does it significantly embody the characteristics of Mid-Century Modern architecture or the post-war bowling alley property type in Sacramento. Thus, the subject property is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V.

## **Criteria 4/VI**

The history of bowling in the United States and Mid-Century Modern architecture in Sacramento are well-documented and understood topics. No other historical or pre-historic associations with the property are known to exist, and thus, the bowling alley property is unlikely to yield additional information important to prehistory or history. As such, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4 and Sacramento Register Criterion VI.

## ***Eligibility Recommendation Summary***

This eligibility evaluation finds that while AMF Land Park Lanes has some historical associations under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V with Mid-Century Modern architecture and post-war bowling alley design, the property does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria as more notable and better examples of both are found in this locality. This is exacerbated by various alterations, which have impacted the building's overall integrity and its ability to convey any potential significance under these criteria. The subject property also lacks historical significance under CRHR/Sacramento Register Criteria 1/I, 2/II, and 4/VI. Thus, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes **not eligible** for the CRHR and Sacramento Register

## **CONCLUSION**

At the request of Bowlero and the City, SWCA evaluated AMF Land Park Lanes for potential historical significance. Pursuant to CEQA, SWCA considered whether the subject property is eligible for listing in the CRHR under any criteria. Since the evaluation criteria for the Sacramento Register is analogous to that of the CRHR, this study also considered whether AMF Land Parks Lanes is eligible as a local landmark. To support the evaluation, SWCA conducted background research, completed an architectural field survey and documentation, developed a historic context statement, and established a property history. After careful consideration of the bowling alley's developmental history, design, and historical associations, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes **not eligible** for listing in the CRHR or Sacramento Register due to a lack of historical significance. Therefore, the AMF Land Park Lanes does not appear to qualify as a historical resource, as defined by CEQA.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Department of Parks and Recreation Forms**

## PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #

HRI #

Trinomial

NRHP Status Code

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

Page 1 of 30

\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) AMF Land Park Lanes

**P1. Other Identifier:** Land Park Lanes, Land Park Bowl

\***P2. Location:**  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \***a. County** Sacramento

and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

**b. USGS 7.5' Quad** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** T R Sec ; **Meridian**

**c. Address:** 5850 Freeport Boulevard City Sacramento Zip 95822

**d. UTM:** (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) See Location Map.

**e. Other Locational Data:** (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)

Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 035-0034-016

**\*P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) AMF Land Park Lanes is a single-story 28,756 square-foot Mid-Century Modern commercial/recreation building (Figure 1) with a roughly L-shaped plan within a 110,207-square-foot rectangular parcel (Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). The entire parcel surrounding the building is paved with asphalt. The building has a concrete slab foundation and is of concrete construction. The building features a low-pitch side-gable roof with a shed roof extension on the south half of the east façade, creating a subtle folded plat roof profile at select elevations (Figure 2). The overhanging eaves of the roof profile are varied from moderate overhang to none depending on the façade (Figure 2–Figure 4) (See Continuation Sheets).

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP6. 1-3 story commercial building

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

**P5b. Description of Photo:** (view, date, accession #)

Figure 1. East (primary) façade, view facing west (October 2024).

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:**

Historic  Prehistoric  Both  
1960

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**

Bowlero Corporation

7313 Bell Creek Rd

Mechanicsville, VA 23111

**\*P8. Recorded by:** (Name, affiliation, and address)

Lisa Demarais, M.H.P. and Dan Herrick, M.H.C.

SWCA Environmental Consulting

100 Howe Avenue, Suite 230N

Sacramento, CA 95825

**\*P9. Date Recorded:** October 22, 2024

**\*P10. Survey Type:** (Describe) Intensive

**\*P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources or enter "none.") SWCA (2024) Historic Resources Evaluation Report for 5850 Freeport Boulevard (AMF Land Park Lanes), Sacramento,

Sacramento County, California.

**\*Attachments:**  NONE  Location 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

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) AMF Land Park Lanes

\*NRHP Status Code 6Z

Page 2 of 30

B1. Historic Name: Land Park Bowl

B2. Common Name: AMF Land Park Lanes

B3. Original Use: Recreation – Bowling B4. Present Use: Recreation – Bowling

\*B5. Architectural Style: Mid-Century Modern

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

See Continuation Sheets.

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

\*B8. Related Features: None

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Winston Steel Works

\*B10. Significance: Theme Community Development – Commercial; Recreation Area Sacramento County

Period of Significance N/A Property Type Bowling Center Applicable Criteria N/A (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural)

This eligibility evaluation finds that subject property does not possess historical significance under any established California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) criteria and is thus recommended not eligible for listing in each of these registers. The bowling has been evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (see Continuation Sheets).

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

\*B12. References: See Continuation Sheets.

B13. Remarks: None.

\*B14. Evaluator: Lisa Demarais and Dan Herrick, SWCA Environmental Consultants

\*Date of Evaluation: October 24, 2024

This space reserved for official comments.

See attached map

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 3 of 30

### P3a. Description (Continued):

The primary (east) façade of the building is dominated by a large, L-shaped decorative awning that protrudes from the roofline and has a large cut-out opening over the building's entrance, reducing its functionality. The decorative awning has a strong linear and geometric form. There is a large, triangular steel sculpture north of the main entry doors, reminiscent of an antenna. The entrance is composed of non-historic aluminum-framed and glazed glass double doors. A secondary single-leaf door with a single-lite transom and picture window are at the southern end of the east façade. Adjacent is a protruding volume constructed of concrete masonry unit blocks with louvered venting and a shed canopy supported by steel poles. The primary façade also has Mid-Century Modern style starburst motifs and the word "BOWL," but these are painted on and not architectural ornamentation (see Figure 1). The starburst motifs and lettering were also recently added circa 2015 (Google Earth 2014, 2015). A large, freestanding non-historic sign with a changeable marquee is east of the building, within the property's parking lot. The permanent portions of the sign read "AMF Bowling Co." and "Snack Bar" (see Figure 1). A small non-historic sign reading "AMF Bowling Co." is on the north façade (see Figure 4). There are additional sets of steel and glass double doors on the north and south façades (see Figure 2 and Figure 4). Each façade also features interspaced steel pilasters.



Figure 2. South façade; view facing north.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 4 of 30



Figure 3. West (left) façade and south (right) façades, view facing northeast.



Figure 4. North façade, view facing south.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 5 of 30

### \*B6. Construction History:

AMF Land Park Lanes was constructed in 1960. A review of historical aerial photographs of the subject property from 1964 through 2022 shows the footprint of the building has remain unchanged during that period (National Environmental Title Research 2024; Sacramento County Tax Assessor 2024). Based on a review of various documents and source materials related to the subject property, as well as the existing conditions observed during the site visit to the property in October 2024 and several public photographs included in the property's Google listing (Google 2024), the AMF Land Park Lanes building and surrounding property are known to have undergone several changes and alterations, including:

- Reconfiguration of the original entrance and installation of the current aluminum fenestration;
- Replacement of other doors and select windows throughout the façades;
- Replacement of the original roof with current metal seam roofing;
- Improvements to interior spaces, including partial replacement of the original ceiling with a fiberglass tile drop-ceiling, installation of newer televisions and audio systems, installation of new signage by amenities, reconfiguration of the coffee shop, and replacement of the coffee shop kiosk desk; and
- Replacement of the original "Land Park Bowl" freestanding neon sign and marquee.

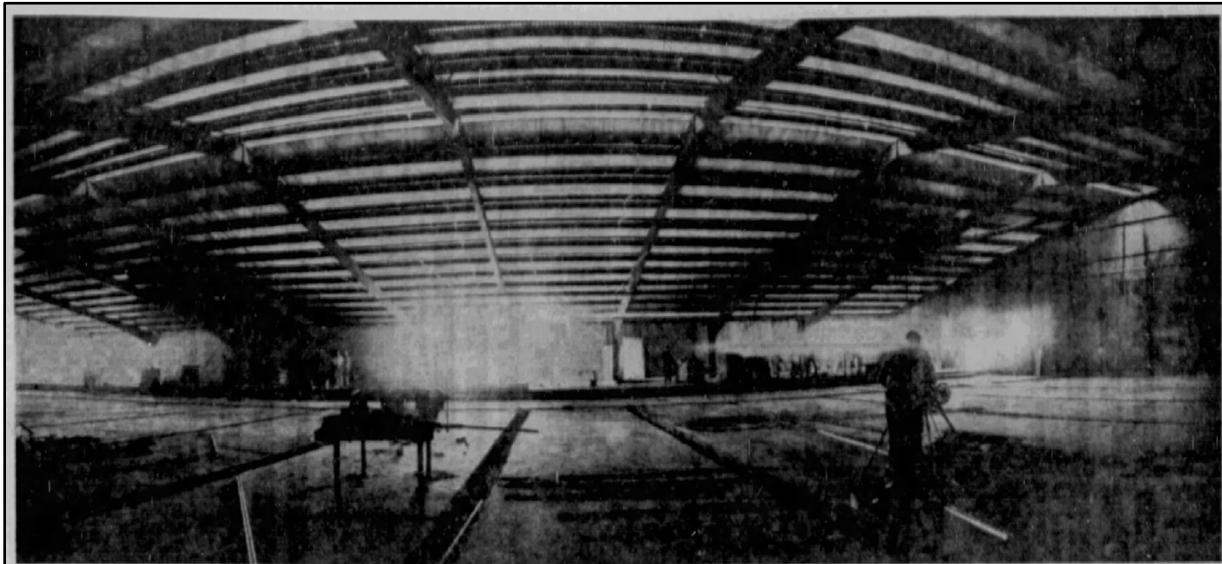
### Property History

The bowling alley was first mentioned in available historical newspaper articles in August 1960, which depicted its interior (Figure 5) and reads:

A pre engineered, 148 foot [sic] clear span, described by James Winston of the Winston Steel Works as the widest of its type in a rigid frame building in Northern California, has been erected in Land Park Lanes. Plans call for the 32 lane [sic] bowling alley, restaurant and bar on Freeport Boulevard, opposite the Sacramento Municipal Airport, to be completed in about six weeks. Owned by the Gonzo Sakai family of Clarksburg, Yolo County, the \$600,000 development will be operated by Dave and Dale Hanna. The steel span was engineered and built by the Winston plants in Sacramento and Stockton, San Joaquin County (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 6 of 30



**Figure 5. Interior view of Land Park Lanes under construction (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960a:17).**

Winston Steel Works, named after owner James Winston and founded in 1946, was a local producer of pre-fabricated steel warehouse and commercial buildings, with plants in Sacramento and Stockton. Winston had decades of experience as a designer, draftsman, engineer, estimator, and contractor and was a member of the Society of American Military Engineers, California Society of Professional Engineers, and Sacramento Chamber of Commerce. The builder used cranes to assemble poured concrete slabs and welded pre-engineered steel elements to construct its buildings—a common technique that Winston Steel Works used to construct buildings throughout Sacramento and that was likely also used to erect AMF Land Park Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7). Winston Steel Works produced many pre-fabricated buildings in the Sacramento area and throughout Northern California, as well as a few buildings farther east and abroad. Most notably, Winston Steel Works built its own plant at 4700 West Capitol Avenue in Sacramento; a highway maintenance station in the Auburn area, which included a warehouse, office, garage, fuel house, and pump house; Palm Market in Auburn; a boiler house at St. Joseph's Hospital in Stockton; an exhibit building for the Inter-Mountain Fair; Hi Land Market at Watt Avenue and I Street in North Highlands, Sacramento; a storage building for General Mills in Lodi; a metal shop at Folsom Dam; a bowling alley in Nevada City; and two buildings at two uranium mills in Argentina (*The Sacramento Union* 1951:7; 1954:45, 1959:23, 1962:4, 1957:31; *Nevada County Nugget* 1961:1; *Auburn Journal* 1957:15; *Lodi News-Sentinel* 1961:21; *Stockton Evening and Sunday Record* 1955:8). The company filed bankruptcy in 1964 and appears to have closed at that time (*The Sacramento Bee* 1964:65).

A grand opening advertisement for the bowling alley, which opened early November 1960, used the name Land Park Bowl and boasted Brunswick automatic pinsetters, subsurface ball returns, a nursery for children, a cocktail lounge, and a coffee shop featuring “excellent food” at modest prices. The bowling alley was also advertised as open 24 hours a day. Within the ad, a rendering of the building’s exterior shows its original appearance (Figure 6); several interior photographs were also included (Figure 8 and Figure 9) (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23). The earliest available photograph of the building’s exterior (Figure

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 7 of 30

7), from just before its opening, shows the original signage and indicates not all the exterior features in the rendering of the grand opening advertisement were included in the building's final design (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17). Based on this historical photograph, several original features have been altered since 1960. The original operators of the bowling alley were David Hanna, Dale Hanna, and Earl Warren (*The Sacramento Union* 1960b:35). In the 1960s and 1970s, the facility also offered bowling classes, leagues, and events for singles and seniors (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:82, 1976:40, 1969:28; Sheppard 1973:30). In the 1960s, the bowling alley suffered several ill-fated events—two robberies and two fires—and in 1974, the bowling alley was sold to Brunswick Corporation, which had previously operated the establishment under a lease (*The Sacramento Bee* 1961:32, 1966a:1, 1966b:32, 1968:64, 1974:46). The building continued to be operated as a bowling alley until its recent closure in March 2024 due to extensive damage to the building's interior (Walike 2024).



Figure 6. Part of the Land Park Bowl grand opening advertisement, showing an exterior rendering of Land Park Bowl (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 8 of 30

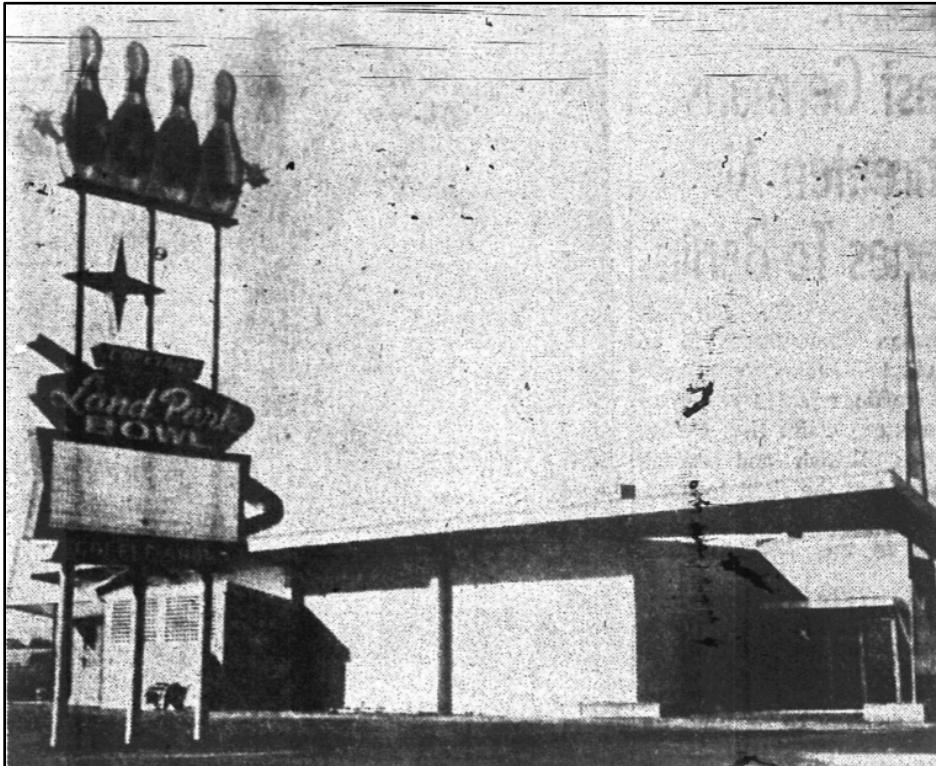


Figure 7. Land Park Bowl, 1960 (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960c:A17).

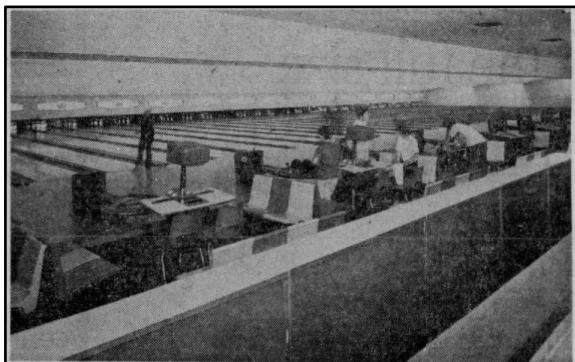


Figure 8. Bowling lanes at Land Park Bowl  
(*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).

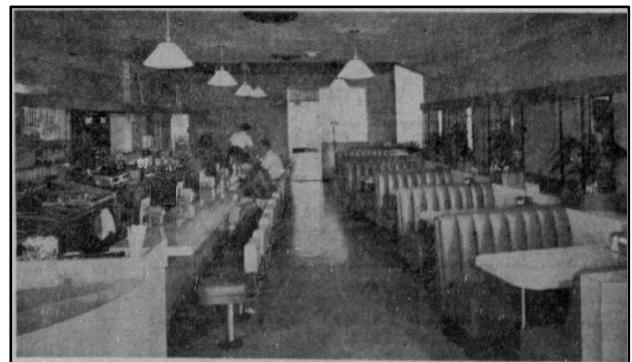


Figure 9. Coffee shop at Land Park Bowl (*The Sacramento Bee* 1960b:23).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 9 of 30

**\*B10. Significance (continued):**

### Historic Contexts

#### Development of Sacramento

##### *Nineteenth Century*

Before European colonization, Nisenan and Plains Miwok called the Sacramento area home. Spanish colonization, which primarily occurred along the southern and central coast of California, did not instantly affect the Indigenous populations of the interior of California. The first recorded European expedition into the interior of California occurred in 1808 by Gabriel Moraga. Moraga surveyed the region to find suitable locations for a future mission and named the Sacramento Valley and Sacramento River, after the Spanish word for sacrament. Throughout the next two decades, various travelers entered the Sacramento Valley, but no permanent non-Indigenous settlements were established until 1839.

In 1839 John Sutter, along with a few Hawaiian and European settlers, established the first non-Indigenous permanent settlement—a fort called New Helvetia. The land was granted by the Mexican government, which controlled California at the time after having gained independence from Spain in 1822. Sutter raised horses and cattle and farmed grain and corn. He also built a sawmill at present-day Coloma in El Dorado County, which would lead to the first discovery of gold in California in 1848 (Page & Turnbull 2019:19–20). The resulting Gold Rush spurred massive westward American migration and settlement of California, greatly influencing the broader history of the state and the United States. Thousands of migrants poured into California during the Gold Rush, greatly accelerating its development (California Department of Conservation 2005; Rice et al. 1994:169). The Gold Rush was a major factor in California's transformation from a sparsely populated western frontier to a center of industry, commerce, and trade. One year after the discovery at Sutter's Mill, nearly 90,000 people had migrated to California in search of gold. As the gateway to the Sierra Nevada and the goldfields of the foothills, Sacramento quickly became a transportation hub and nexus of Gold Rush economic activity (Page & Turnbull 2019:19-20; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

Also in 1848, and shortly after the discovery of gold in California, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and made California a territory of the United States (National Archives 2023). On January 4, 1850, California's first constitutional convention convened, establishing the first 18 counties. Over the succeeding months, additional counties were added, bringing the total to 27 on the day of California's admission to the United States on September 9, 1850. Sacramento County was one of those original counties, with the City of Sacramento its county seat. The City would become the capital of California in 1854, in large part due to the Gold Rush, which had caused massive population growth in the area and established its role as a center of commerce (California State Association of Counties 2019; Miller and Walton 2016:9).

While the primary draw to California in the late 1840s and early 1850s was the insatiable dream of striking it rich in the gold fields, many found the search for gold much more difficult than expected. Many of the people who migrated to the California gold fields, originally from agrarian and business backgrounds,

## **CONTINUATION SHEET**

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 10 of 30

soon realized the real riches lay in establishing enterprises that profited from miners, such as agricultural pursuits (California State Association of Counties 2019). This was true in Sacramento County, which is situated in the northern Central Valley, a region known for its rich agricultural lands. Grain cultivation and grazing dominated land use in the Sacramento area until the turn of the twentieth century when new crops such as citrus fruits and almonds took prominence (Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Amidst the Gold Rush and statehood, Sacramento was under formal development and soon began to take the shape of a true city. In December 1848, John Sutter, Jr. and Sam Brannan hired topographical engineer Captain William H. Warner and Lieutenant William Sherman to survey and layout "Sacramento City." The original city grid consisted of 26 lettered (originally A to Z, today C to Broadway) and 31 numbered (originally 1st to 31st, today Front to Alhambra) streets. Sacramento's city grid was built directly at the base of the American River flood basin, where centuries of Sierra Nevada snowmelt created temporary lakes each spring, well into the 1840s. Sacramento's original townsite was a 5-square-mile area, with each street 80 feet wide (except for Front and M) and each block 320 to 340 feet long. Each block was composed of many lots, and many blocks were divided by 20-foot-wide alleys (Figure 10) (Owens 2013:32–33, 42–43; Hallam 2013:63–64).

Sacramento grew through 1850; however, the population was not stable and remained largely transient aside from the core of merchants and hotel owners. California's population was undoubtedly increasing, but the population of Sacramento grew sluggishly and inconsistently due in part to the transient nature of the early Gold Rush miners, flooding, and fires that destroyed buildings. In September 1849, a destructive fire swept through the business district, destroying several blocks of canvas tent and wood-framed structures, followed by a major flood in January 1850. In 1852 fire again swept through the business district, destroying over 55 blocks of the city. Original buildings in Sacramento were wood frame and canvas, but as fires and floods became a way of life, citizens began to erect buildings of brick and raised the street level, leaving the original street level below grade.

In 1854 Sacramento became the capital of California. This rise in prominence, coupled with the City's strategic location and early commercial importance in the development of California, resulted in Sacramento becoming the western terminus for the first transcontinental railroad, which was constructed starting in 1863 and completed in 1869. The Central Pacific Railroad Company, which later became the Southern Pacific Railroad and then later the Union Pacific Railroad, was founded by a group of merchants and businessman known as "the Big Four," who were based in Sacramento, or had strong ties to the region. This development solidified Sacramento as a center for transportation in California, providing immediate links to San Francisco and the growing agricultural hinterlands of the central valleys with the rest of the United States (Owens 2013:48–50; Page & Turnbull 2019:23).

Through the 1870s and into the 1900s, growth continued eastward away from the original core along the river embankment (or *embarcadero*) and K Street. The patterns of growth were often reflective of the types of amenities in given neighborhoods, including schools and parks. John Sutter Jr., the primary driving force for the development of Sacramento, had the City laid in a grid pattern with spaces specifically for city plazas. These plaza parks provided residents with publicly accessible spaces within an urban core. In the 1870s, several state government buildings were built in Sacramento, including the extant Capitol

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 11 of 30

Building and the adjacent landscaped park. As growth continued, pushed by the development of streetcars, which connected new neighborhoods with the urban commercial core, the main city grid began to fill. Homes were built in a variety of popular styles such as Greek Revival and Italianate. By the 1890s, speculators had begun to eye land outside of the main grid for development. This led to development of Sacramento's first residential suburban tracts of Oak Park, Elmhurst, Curtis Park, and East Sacramento (Kremer 2012; Page & Turnbull 2019:21, 27).

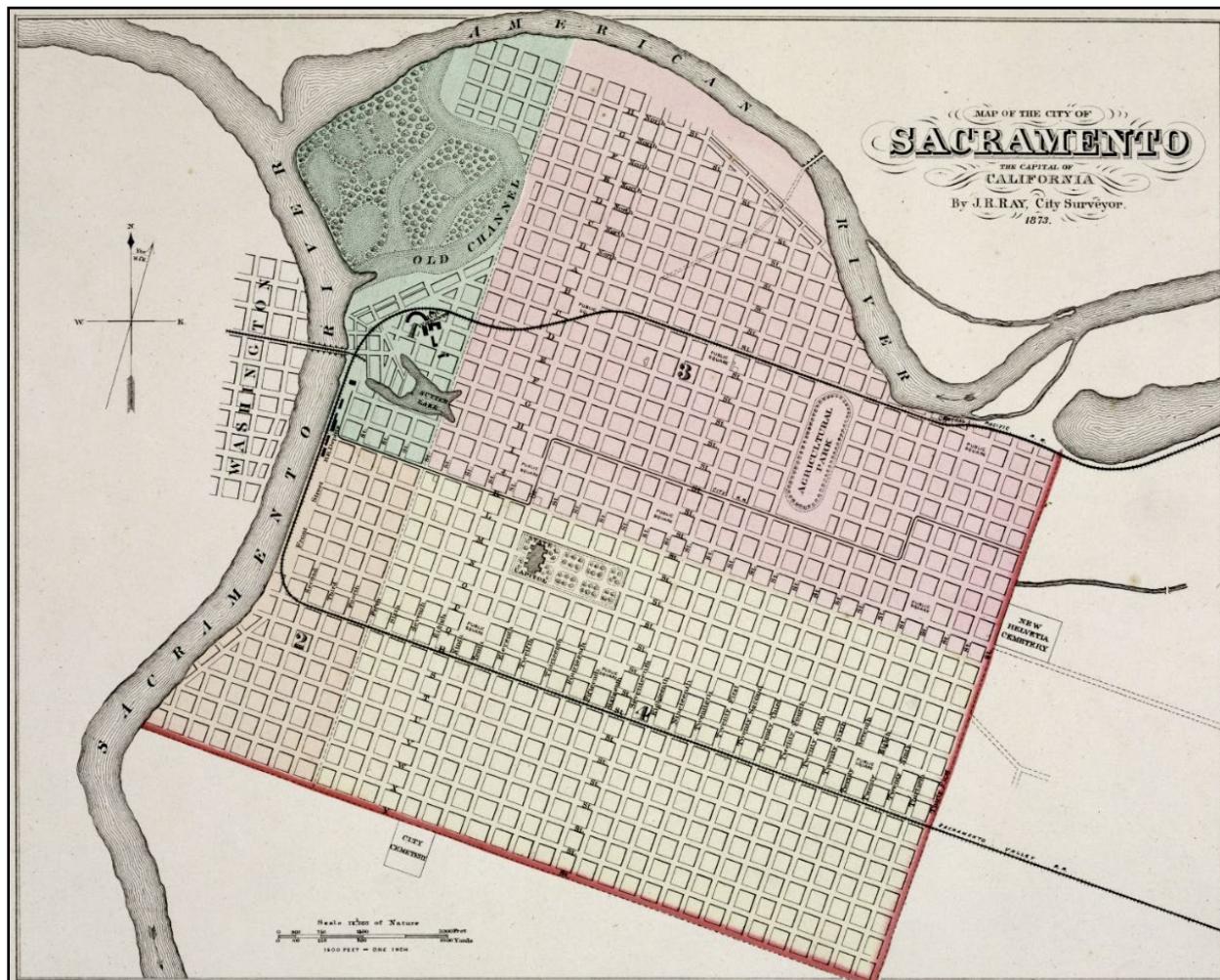


Figure 10. Surveyor's map of the City of Sacramento, California, 1874 (J. R. Ray). Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum.

### Twentieth Century

Sacramento continued to grow during the early to mid-twentieth century with increased residential, commercial, government, infrastructure, and transportation development. The early twentieth century was marked by steady growth and early suburbanization, while Sacramento's development during the

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 12 of 30

post-war period largely followed national trends of continued post-war suburbanization, expansion of the automobile, and late-twentieth century urban renewal, which sought to bring people back to cities that were broadly viewed negatively. Many Americans at the time saw cities as centers of disease and crime. Urban renewal, or urban revitalization, was undertaken across the United States during the 1950s to 1980s (Williams 2013:v, 23–25; Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

In the early twentieth century, residential expansion grew outward from downtown Sacramento to the fringes of the original city limits. These new homes were built in a myriad of newly popular architectural styles such as Prairie and Craftsman styles. Affluent homes were typically built on east–west-aligned streets, while moderately sized homes were constructed on the numbered streets. Ancillary buildings such as stables and cottages for laborers were constructed facing alleys. Several new neighborhoods like Boulevard Park, Winn Park, Newton Booth, and Bungalow Row emerged during this time, largely along streetcar lines. In addition to streetcars, in the early twentieth century, Sacramento developed four electric interurban railroads for passenger service. The service had more frequent railroad stops and were faster than the streetcars. Streetcar service ended in 1947, but some passenger rail service continues. Many new civic buildings were built in downtown Sacramento in the early twentieth century. This new civic construction largely adhered to popular styles at the time, notably Neoclassical Revival and Beaux-Arts Revival. This type of development briefly slowed during the Great Depression but was renewed during and post-World War II. Several military facilities were constructed at McClellan Field, Mather Field, and the Sacramento Army Depot while new state buildings were constructed surrounding Capitol Park (Page & Turnbull 2019:26, 32–33). Pre-war commercial development was largely within downtown and midtown (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-16).

Sacramento underwent many changes in the mid-twentieth century as a direct result of World War II and expansion of the automobile. The economy shifted from primarily agriculture to military, federal and state government, and transportation industries. Alongside the national population, Sacramento saw significant population growth of its own, with an increase from 105,958 in 1940 to 137,572 in 1950. This growing population was also more mobile than ever before, spurring expansion of development outside of Sacramento's downtown core. The growing post-war population spurred a housing shortage and rapid construction of new homes. New post-war residences were most frequently built in Minimal Traditional and Mid-Century Modern styles outside of the core city and in suburban areas (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-4). In 1947 planning for a new freeway system began, marking the beginning of a shift to automobile travel instead of streetcar and rail service. By 1961, the South Sacramento, Elvas, and Capital City Freeways were complete. The city core connected to these routes via surface streets. By 1954, planning for an east–west-oriented freeway was underway (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-13–2-14).

World War II also had a profound effect on the Japanese-American population; more than 7,000 Japanese-American Sacramento residents were forcibly relocated to internment camps during the war, and of those, only 59% returned to the city after the war. During this time, the government instituted the Bracero Program to fill job vacancies left by the removal of Japanese-American citizens with temporary Mexican labor. The program resulted in a shift in the ethnic makeup of Sacramento's labor force (Page & Turnbull 2019:29).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 13 of 30

With the increasing availability and affordability of automobiles in the post-war era, most new residents, drawn to Sacramento for its available jobs, began life in the suburbs. For these same reasons, in the 1950s, state government buildings began to be dispersed throughout the city and post-war commercial development was largely focused on areas outside of downtown Sacramento, specifically in areas south, east, and northeast of downtown (Page & Turnbull 2019:32–33; Page & Turnbull 2019:22, 26–28). New commercial development was focused on independent business alongside major thoroughfares outside of downtown and through or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Some major retailers also left downtown, such as Sears, which moved to a new suburban location in 1956. The City convinced Macy's to construct a new downtown store, which was completed in 1963, but this did not have the desired effect of inspiring new downtown commercial development (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-19).

Like the automobile and World War II, urban renewal had a profound impact across Sacramento during the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1950s, the City began efforts of urban renewal, starting with the West End, Sacramento's skid row, through the newly created Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA). Subsequent plans undertaken in the 1960s to 1970s also involved redeveloping the Capitol Mall, Alkali Flat, and Oak Park areas. The roots of urban renewal date to the 1940s. At the federal level, the Housing Act of 1949 provided federal subsidies for local redevelopment projects and gave local agencies the power to acquire parcels through eminent domain for redevelopment, and the Housing Act of 1954 coined the term urban renewal. At the state level, urban renewal dates to the 1945 Community Development Act. The movement was a reaction to the economic decline in cities across the country as commercial and residential development largely moved to the suburbs. Cities at the time were broadly viewed negatively. Sacramento's West End was seen as a center of vice, disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency. Ultimately, urban renewal resulted in mass demolition of buildings that displaced thousands of residents and businesses in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-7-2-8; Page & Turnbull 2019:28, 30; Williams 2013:25). Despite the renewal efforts, the suburban model for development with sprawling expansions of residential neighborhoods, strip malls, and shopping centers would continue to define Sacramento and the surrounding region during the twentieth century, as evident in present-day.

### South Land Park

The project area lies within South Land Park, which was annexed in the 1950s and today is bounded by Suterville Road to the north, Florin Avenue to the south, Freeport Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 5 to the west. The area is known for its “rolling hills, mature native oak trees, and curving streets” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-35). The Land Park area, including South Land Park, was named for William Land, Sacramento's mayor from 1898 to 1899, who made his fortune with hotels in downtown Sacramento. Before it was Land Park, the area was part of New Helvetia, an 11-square-league Mexican land grant given to John Sutter in 1841 by then-governor Juan B. Alvarado (Isidro 2005:7-13, 18; Hoffman 1862). Development during this period was largely north of Suterville Road in the town of Suterville, within present-day Land Park but north of South Land Park. Early sketches show Suterville as a burgeoning community as early as 1846 and include a brickyard, carpenter, blacksmith, and several saloons by 1847. Suterville Brewery was built on the south side of Suterville Road for Robert H. Vance in 1853, within the northernmost part of South Land Park. The brewery was demolished in 1853 and was known as Suterville's last remaining building (Whittle 2009; Isidro 2005:9). By 1885, the entire Sutter land grant had

## **CONTINUATION SHEET**

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 14 of 30

been divided into many tracts ranging from 10 to over 1,000 acres and sold to many different property owners (Shepherd 1885).

The first homes in South Land Park were built as early as 1902, at the southwest corner of present-day Sutterville Road and Freeport Boulevard, and several more homes were built by 1907 (U.S. Geological Survey 1902, 1907). The Mead Family, which built residences during this time, is largely attributed to developing the area. In the 1940s, after the economic downturn of the Great Depression, developers began larger-scale projects in South Land Park, though there was a pause during World War II. Since the 1940s, hundreds of homes have been constructed in South Land Park, and Freeport Boulevard has become a busy shopping district. The South Land Park Hills Historic District alone features 49 residences built by developer Joseph Eichler from 1955 to 1956, known for his non-discriminatory housing policies during segregation. By the early 1970s, construction of Interstates 5 and 80 was complete, providing better access to South Land Park and further solidifying the importance of the automobile and suburbanization in Sacramento (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:2-14, 2-35-2-36; *Sacramento City Express* 2024). Today, the neighborhood continues to retain its suburban qualities with post-war single-family residences and commercial corridors dotted with low-density shopping centers and strip malls.

### **Bowling and Bowling Alleys in Sacramento**

The game of bowling, and its variations of target bowling (bocce, lawn bowls, etc.) and pin bowling, have ancient and widespread roots with early variations having been practiced in Egypt in the sixth century, Polynesia, and elsewhere. Modern bowling in the United States, however, evolved from traditions brought over by European immigrants and settlers, primarily from Germany and other parts of northern Europe. The earliest portrayal of the game in the United States was in Washington Irving's 1819 book *Rip Van Winkle*, which depicted characters playing an early variation of the game known as ninepins. Over the following decades, bowling became increasingly popular, resulting in the construction of indoor lanes in New York and other cities with large German populations, including Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and others (United States Bowling Conference 2024).

With the discovery of gold in California at Sutter's Mill on the American River in 1848, the ensuing Gold Rush lured thousands of people from all over the world, including the eastern United States, as well as western Europe. Throughout the mining camps and emerging towns and centers, drinking and gambling were often the most ubiquitous forms of entertainment and recreation with saloons and gambling halls being constructed from the ports of San Francisco up into the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada, earning early California an overall reputation for "moral laxity" (Khoury 2012). Gambling games varied, ranging from cards to bullfights, boxing and races, to bowling and billiards. Bowling was particularly popular during the Gold Rush with many saloons and gambling halls constructing adjoining bowling alleys as an added amenity for patrons. In an 1851 letter written by Dame Shirley (Shirley and Russell 1922), the wife of a mining camp doctor, to her sister, she wrote:

The rolling on the bowling alley never leaves off for ten consecutive minutes at any time during the entire twenty-four hours. It is a favorite amusement of the mines; and the only difference that Sunday makes is that it never leaves off for one minute.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 15 of 30

As the launching point into the gold fields and mining camps of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 1850s Sacramento featured several saloons, billiard rooms, gambling halls, and bowling alleys. One of the earliest advertised bowling alleys was the Central Bowling Alley, located at No.51 J Street between 2nd and 3rd Streets, which boasted four 70-foot lanes that were constructed "in the most substantial manner" and a bar "supplied with the most choice liquors of all kinds, and the finest flavored cigars . . ." (*Daily California Statesman* 1855; *The Sacramento Bee* 1857). Many other bowling alleys were located throughout the central portion of the city, located in adjoining buildings or within the basements of saloons, which often featured billiards, shooting galleries, dance halls, and stages for live music. One such place was called "The New Corner," which was in the basement of the Morse Building, which is still standing in Old Sacramento at 1025-1031 2nd Street (*The Sacramento Bee* 1866). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the game also had popularity outside of the saloons and gambling halls as a simple form of recreation, with alleys constructed in upper class social clubs, as well as the construction of lanes by the Sacramento Athletic Club and the Sacramento Young Men's Christian Association as a form of recreation alongside gymnastics, fitness, and other forms of sport alongside intellectual and spiritual pursuits (*The Sacramento Union* 1887). Wealthy individuals also constructed their own personal bowling alleys within their grand mansions and estates within Sacramento and the surrounding area. One of the most notable was that of Adolph Heilbron, a German cattle rancher and landowner, who constructed his grand Italianate mansion at 704 O Street; the still extant residence was listed on the NRHP in 1976 (*The Sacramento Bee* 1892; Price 1975). Despite this proliferation of bowling as a more popular form of recreation, the majority of alleys and lanes continued to be in the setting of saloons, bars, and German-owned beer gardens well into the early twentieth century (*The Sacramento Bee* 1896; Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:187).



Figure 11. Early bowling alley in Sacramento, 1915 (International Bowling Museum & Hall of Fame 2024).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 16 of 30

As Sacramento expanded with the development of early streetcar suburbs in the early twentieth century, so did new recreation halls. In Oak Park and East Sacramento, new bowling alleys were developed as the sport continued to proliferate within popular culture. New bowling leagues were founded and tournaments were held at locations such as the Sequoia Bowling Alley on 909 K Street, drawing in teams from around the Sacramento area to regularly compete for a variety of prizes (*The Sacramento Star* 1910). Emerging as its own sport, local bowling scores were often increasingly published in local papers under the sports section. While the sport had previously been exclusive to men, women and youth bowlers became increasingly common during the 1920s and the sport was marketed to a broader, albeit Caucasian, demographic with new leagues, tournaments, and other events (*The Sacramento Union* 1931; Shannon 2017:3).

Bowling had been long associated with drinking establishments and the sale of alcohol; however, the enactment of prohibition in 1920 quickly changed the game. Many of the alleys associated with taverns and saloons were closed, while some bowling alley owners reorganized their business model to focus on the sport itself, decoupling from associations with alcohol and creating a more family-friendly pastime (Riess 2015:187). During this period, the common naming conventions of bowling alleys changed, often substituting the words like bowl or lane instead of alley. Rules and standards of the game and the distinctly American 10-pin variant were more codified and regulated by organizations like the American Bowling Congress, and new dry purpose-built bowling alleys were constructed throughout the United States, bringing the sport into the mainstream (Riess 2015:187; Shannon 2017:1-3). Despite the proliferation of bowling into popular culture as part of prohibition, a more widespread expansion of bowling alleys did not occur until its repeal, allowing for drinking to again become part of the bowling pastime, establishing it as a major outlet for socializing and recreation in communities, particularly for young men (Riess 2015:188). Unlike the bowling alleys before, large new bowling facilities with multiple lanes were constructed under the new specifications of the sport with bowling as the primary activity and not an added amenity as a barroom game. Just before World War II, there were an estimated 12 million bowlers in the United States, and the sport continued to grow in popularity steadily over the 1930s through World War II (Shannon 2017:1-4).

Many of these new post-Prohibition “bowling palaces” were constructed in Sacramento during the 1930s and early 1940s, including Capitol Bowl at 1415 L Street (1939), North Bowl at 1721 Del Paso Boulevard (1941), and Alhambra Bowl at 1229 Alhambra Boulevard (1942) (*The Sacramento Union* 1939, 1941; *The Sacramento Bee* 1942a). These facilities were composed in a Streamlined or Moderne style (Figure 12 and Figure 13) architecture with prominent marquee, and often featured a dozen or so lanes, air conditioning, restaurant corners, cocktail lounges, league meeting rooms, locker rooms, spectator seating areas, and occasionally billiard rooms (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942a).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 17 of 30

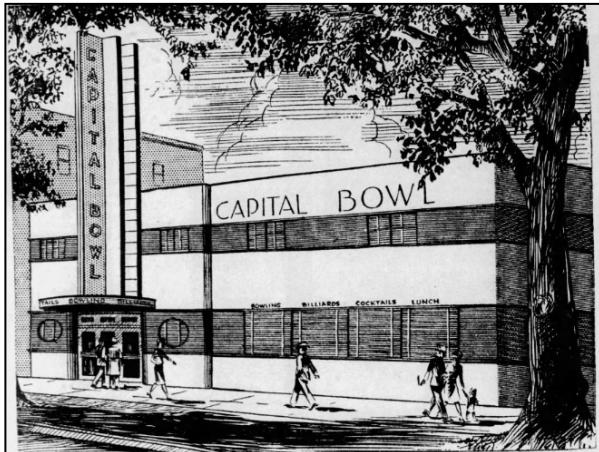


Figure 12. Advertisement for the Capitol Bowl, 1939 (*The Sacramento Union*).



Figure 13. Image of Alhambra Bowl from a 1942 flyer (Sacramento Public Library).

During World War II, bowling alleys in Sacramento remained open although construction of new alleys stalled. An exception was on military bases in the area, where bowling lanes were installed as a form of recreation for the servicemen (*The Sacramento Bee* 1942b). Approximately 4,500 bowling lanes were constructed on military bases across the United States during World War II and more women's leagues were established amongst civilians. It was not until the post-war period that the expansion of bowling as a sport reached a new level of popularity outside of military bases. The 1950s and 1960s are often considered the golden age of bowling with new purpose-built bowling facilities constructed throughout the rapidly expanding post-war landscape of American cities and towns (Shannon 2017:3; Riess 2015:188). Bowling was an important aspect of recreation in post-war America, with an estimated 20 million bowlers across the country in 1948. A one-lane bowling alley was even installed in the White House by President Truman in 1947. Many of these post-war bowling alleys had restaurants, meeting or banquet rooms, and lounges that served as places to socialize or gather local clubs, groups, and organizations. Most often, they were constructed in Mid-Century Modern architectural styles, with the Googie style being most notable, and eye-catching signage, such as the one at Fireside Lanes in Sacramento (Figure 14), was a key design element (Shannon 2017:1, 4, 20-22; Pope Studios 1960).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 18 of 30



**Figure 14. Fireside Lanes, 1960 (Pope Studios). Courtesy of the Sacramento Public Library.**

Sacramento was no exception with new modern and larger bowling alleys constructed throughout the expanding reaches of the cities growing suburbs in the post-war era. New bowling alleys included Sacramento Bowl located at 917 6th Street (1948), Town and Country Bowl on Fulton Avenue (1956) South Bowl at 5005 Stockton Boulevard (1958), El Rancho Bowl at 900 West Capitol Avenue in West Sacramento (1959), Country Club Lanes at 2600 Watt Avenue (1960), Cordova Lanes in Rancho Cordova (1960), Fireside Lanes (1960) at 7901 Auburn Boulevard (see Figure 14), and Land Park Bowl at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (1960) (*The Sacramento Union* 1956, 1958, 1959, 1960a; Pope Studios 1960).

By the 1950s, bowling was solidified as an American pastime suitable for families, a stark difference from its early association with gambling. New facilities, typically composed in some variation of the Mid-Century Modern style, also featured significantly more lanes, new technologies, and amenities. Bowling centers with 40 to 60 lanes became most common in the United States, and new technologies such as air conditioning, automatic pin setters, and underground ball returns became widespread. In Sacramento, smaller 20- to 40-lane bowling alleys were most common. Like bowling alley exteriors, interiors were also often lavishly designed with colorful carpets, murals, and other decorative details. These types of bowling alleys were built rapidly across the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, and substantial building costs over one million dollars were not uncommon. Bowling center amenities

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 19 of 30

continued to expand. Cocktail lounges and meeting rooms were still common, but instructional programs, live musical performances, coffee shops, concessions, childcare facilities, and pro-equipment shops also became common offerings. Many bowling alleys of this era were also open 24 hours a day to further attract diverse clientele. Some bowling alleys even offered laundry and grocery shopping services to attract housewives during daytime hours. The number of children bowling also substantially increased in the post-war era with nearly 400,000 members of the Junior Congress bowling association in 1959 (Riess 2015:188; Shannon 2017:3-5).

Because of racial segregation, the bowling centers of this era were typically restricted to white Americans and the clientele was largely suburban, though with the encouragement of the National Bowling Association, some bowling alleys provided specific times for people of color to bowl. More often, older outdated bowling alleys were purchased specifically for use by persons of color (Shannon 2017:5). Of the bowling alleys constructed in Sacramento during this period, one of the most notable was the El Rancho Bowl (now Capitol Bowl), which is believed to be the first racially integrated bowling alleys in the region, allowing for patrons of any race to partake and form leagues at the facility (Saizan 2014). Another notable bowling alley was Country Club Lanes, which was the largest and most celebrated of these facilities during this period. In addition to the wide array of amenities, the building featured iconic Mid-Century Modern architecture with some Googie-inspired elements with its broad parabolic entrance canopies (Figure 15; *The Sacramento Union* 1960a).



Figure 15. Advertisement for the opening of Country Club Lanes (*The Sacramento Union* 1960a).

By the 1970s, with increased forms of recreation and entertainment available to the public, the popularity of bowling started to wane. Bowling leagues became less popular and many bowling establishments were forced to close. As women entered the workforce in greater numbers, daytime customers became fewer. Many bowling alleys were demolished during this period as land values increased. This trend would continue in part throughout the remainder of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. As part of this, many of the larger bowling centers built additional amenities to attract patrons, such as

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 20 of 30

arcades. The character-defining features of many early bowling alleys were removed as they were purchased and updated in the 1970s and 1980s (Shannon 2017:5–6). New bowling alleys constructed at this later date were often within the setting of larger gaming facilities or bars, such as Punch Bowl Social in downtown Sacramento, offering only a few lanes as a single amenity and novelty rather than the primary form of recreation.

### Mid-Century Modern Architecture

As discussed in the previous section, bowling alleys of the post-war era, like AMF Land Park Lanes, were typically built in Mid-Century Modern styles. Modernism emerged as a popular architectural style and aesthetic philosophy throughout the United States during the early-to-mid twentieth century, reaching its heyday in the post-World War II era. Modernism was greatly influenced by industrialization during and after World War II, which made new building materials such as glass and steel more common and affordable. Modernism markedly diverged from past architectural styles with its function over ornamentation ethos. Several Modernist-style offshoots developed during the twentieth century, including Googie, International, and Late Moderne (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1–3-10). Though many of these styles had key differences, they typically shared the following features:

**Form** – overall geometric massing and simple, clean lines; emphasis on horizontality, though not with unrelieved flat planes; in multi-story structures, interior floors are often demarcated on the exterior with an inset first floor and cantilevered planes to indicate upper floors.

**Structure** – exposed structural system typically using concrete, steel, or wood materials, and some concrete block or masonry for smaller structures.

**Roof** – flat or low-pitches, often with deep overhangs/eaves emphasizing horizontality; some with large sweeping or folded forms.

**Exterior and interior walls** – contrasting materials and textures or smooth, blank walls typically filling entire structural “bays”; exterior walls and openings in offset planes along horizontal lines; use of exterior screens or grills that shelter window and door openings, usually in concrete or metal.

**Windows** – custom windows (ribbon, picture, corner); large expanses of glass arranged in horizontal groupings of vertically oriented sashes, with glazing often filling entire structural bays; windows may be located in clerestory, between solid walls and eaves.

**Integrated site planning and landscapes designs** – sliding glass doors, integrated indoor and outdoor private living spaces, courtyards with screens, walls, berms, or plantings that provide demarcation between private and public outdoor spaces; plantings generally have a horizontal orientation relative to sun angles and topography (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-5–3-6).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 21 of 30

During the war, material rations and a moratorium on housing construction in the United States stagnated the construction of Modernist architecture. After the war, with these limitations removed, the economy in a period of prosperity, and the population expanding, there was a construction boom that favored Modern design principles and features. Modernist architecture of the post-war era is referred to under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modernism. A variety of property types were newly constructed in the Mid-Century Modern style in the post-war era, including residential, institutional, commercial, and educational buildings (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-1-3-6, 3-9-3-10). Common features of these buildings included “cantilevered roofs, flat or shed roof forms, deep overhanging eaves, canted and large expansive windows, and a variety of incorporated materials, including wood, stone, brick, stucco, plastic, metal, and concrete” (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-9-3-10). Styles under the umbrella of Mid-Century Modern architecture included Modern Ranch, Contemporary, Commercial Modern, Brutalism, and more (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-10-3-15).

During the 1950s to 1970s, Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture was often influenced by the earlier International style. On the opposite end of the spectrum, many commercial buildings in the 1950s and 1960s, were built in the striking Googie (or Exaggerated Modern) style. While the International style, and Mid-Century Modern commercial architecture influenced by the style, was defined by crisp clean lines, flat roofs, horizontality, and limited ornamentation, the Googie style was dramatic and striking. Common features of Googie-style architecture included exaggerated non-linear rooflines, irregular massing and asymmetrical façades, colorful accents, prominent signage, neon lights, and starburst motifs (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:3-8-3-9, 3-12). Key commercial corridors in Sacramento include Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Freeport Boulevard, Broadway, Del Paso Boulevard, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and Capitol Avenue. Examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture, such as the Loan/Chase Bank (4701 Freeport Boulevard) (Figure 16) and Gunther's Ice Cream (2801 Franklin Boulevard), can be found within these areas (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017:1-6, 2-13). The South Land Park Hills (Eichler) Historic District is composed of 49 Mid-Century Modern homes (*Sacramento City Press* 2024).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 22 of 30



**Figure 16. Loan/Chase Bank Building, 2017 (GEI and Mead & Hunt 2017).**

### Eligibility Evaluation

SWCA carefully considered whether AMF Land Park Lanes possesses historical significance under any CRHR or Sacramento Register criteria and historical integrity under the seven aspects of integrity. As the eligibility criteria for both registers is analogous, eligibility is considered concurrently, below.

#### **Criteria 1/I**

AMF Land Park Lanes is not significantly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of history under CRHR Criterion 1 and Sacramento Register Criterion I. While the bowling alley was part of a broader trend of the growing popularity of bowling in the mid-twentieth century and the proliferation of new bowling alleys throughout the United States during that period, AMF Land Park Lanes was one of hundreds of mid-century bowling alleys built across the United States and one of many built in the Sacramento area during this period, of which more characteristic and influential examples exist. The subject property also did not have an influence on the development of bowling or patterns of development relating to bowling, which was one of the earliest forms of recreation in Sacramento and the surrounding region. Furthermore, the subject building was one of the later bowling alleys constructed in area during this post-war “Golden Age” of bowling. The property also did not have an influence on the broader development of South Land Park and, on its own, does not characterize the

## **CONTINUATION SHEET**

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 23 of 30

commercial development of this area. In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not a good representation of the themes and period it is associated with, indicating the associations do not rise to the threshold of historical significance. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under Criteria 1/I.

### **Criterion 2/II**

There is no evidence that the AMF Land Park Lanes has an important association with any person or persons who made significant contributions to history at the local, state, or national level. Research did not reveal any notable figures specifically associated with the bowling alley, and research did not indicate the potential for significant associations in this regard. Thus, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2 and Sacramento Register Criterion II.

### **Criterion 3/III, IV, and V**

Constructed in 1960, the AMF Land Park Lanes building is composed in the Mid-Century Modern style. Although the building was originally designed and rendered with many hallmarks of the style—full-height glazing entrance system, flagstone cladding, and L-shaped columns integrated into a pronounced folded plate roofline—what was constructed in the building's original form was notably reduced in detail, creating a simpler and more commonplace characterization of the style (see Figure 14). Furthermore, AMF Land Park Lanes formerly had a distinct, lavish sign characteristic of Mid-Century Modern commercial properties and typical of post-war bowling alleys; however, this sign is no longer extant. Outside of the L-shaped decorative awning and the triangular structure at the entrance, the building currently lacks any characteristic Mid-Century Modern features. Additionally, the non-extant sign was the only notable characteristic of the original design that represented broader themes of architecture and design regarding both the Mid-Century Modern style and post-war bowling alley design. Due to the removal of this feature and other alterations found throughout the building, the current building is essentially a simple box form with simple Modern-style elements at the entrance. Overall, in its current condition, the subject property does not embody the Mid-Century Modern style, particularly within the context of South Land Park and Sacramento, which features a notable collection of Mid-Century Modern resources that better embody the style and its characteristics.

As an example of the post-war bowling alley property type, the subject property does not appear to rise to a level of significance. Although these post-war bowling alleys are becoming increasingly rare, several examples exist within the Sacramento area that better reflect the characteristics of the typology, the most notable of which is the extant Country Club Lanes building, which was the largest and most celebrated bowling alley of the period, complete with amenities and architectural details that fully embody the typology and this era in bowling alley design. By comparison, the subject building, particularly in its altered state, is a typical and lackluster example of this typology and does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria.

There is no known architect for the property; though, its simple design indicates its engineer and builder, Winston Steel Works, was likely also responsible for the design. Winston Steel Works has not had a profound influence on the history of architecture, design, or engineering; research indicates the company only ever produced pre-fabricated buildings using well-established construction and assembly techniques.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: AMF Land Park Lanes  
Page 24 of 30

The steel span roof structure was, at its time of construction, believed by Winston Steel Works to be the largest in Northern California, but it was not a new feat of engineering, as large steel span roof systems have been common in California and the United States since the post-war era. The engineering of the building was also pre-fabricated and not unique. Many such roof systems dating to the mid-century period also exist throughout Northern California, and while AMF Land Parks Lanes may have had one of the largest in Northern California for a time, this would have been a brief and/or very marginal accolade not reaching the threshold of historical significance. As such, the subject property lacks historical significance for its engineering. Similarly, the building does not appear to be a significant work of a master architect or builder.

In summary, AMF Land Park Lanes is not historically significant for its engineering or as the work of a master architect or builder, nor does it significantly embody the characteristics of Mid-Century Modern architecture or the post-war bowling alley property type in Sacramento. Thus, the subject property is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V.

### Criterion D

The history of bowling in the United States and Mid-Century Modern architecture in Sacramento are well-documented and understood topics. No other historical or pre-historic associations with the property are known to exist, and thus, the bowling alley property is unlikely to yield additional information important to prehistory or history. As such, AMF Land Park Lanes is recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4 and Sacramento Register Criterion VI.

### Summary of Eligibility

This eligibility evaluation finds that while AMF Land Park Lanes has some historical associations under CRHR Criterion 3 and Sacramento Register Criteria III, IV, and V with Mid-Century Modern architecture and post-war bowling alley design, the property does not rise to a level of significance under these criteria as more notable and better examples of both are found in this locality. This is exacerbated by various alterations, which have impacted the building's overall integrity and its ability to convey any potential significance under these criteria. The subject property also lacks historical significance under CRHR/Sacramento Register Criteria 1/I, 2/II, and 4/VI. Thus, SWCA recommends AMF Land Park Lanes **not eligible** for the CRHR and Sacramento Register

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## LOCATION MAP

Primary#

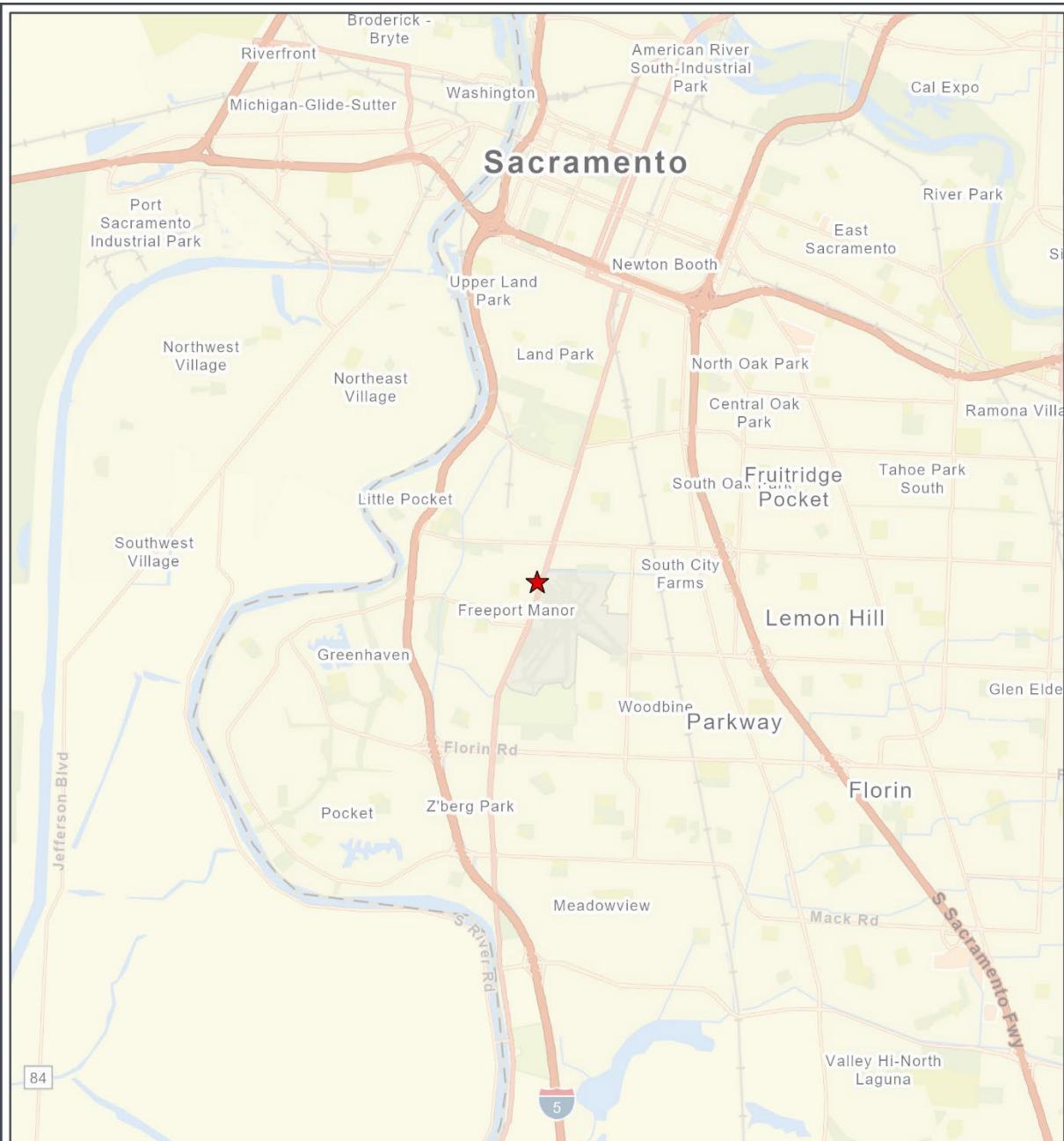
HR#

Trinomial

Page 30 of 30

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) AMF Land Park Lanes

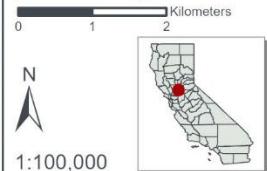
\*Date of map: 2024



★ Project Location

Sacramento County, CA  
NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N  
38.5193°N 121.4998°W

0 0.5 1 Miles  
0 1 2 Kilometers



Base Map: Esri ArcGIS Online,  
accessed October 2024  
Updated: 10/24/2024  
Project No. 93135  
Layout: 93135\_Pri\_Vic  
Apx: 93135\_working

1:100,000

**SWCA**  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

May 20, 2025

Cecily Barclay  
CBarclay@perkinscoie.com  
D. +1.415.344.7117  
F. +1.415.344.7317

Preservation Commissioners  
Sean de Courcy, Preservation Director  
Whitney Johnson, Assistant Planner  
Michael Sparks, Senior Deputy City Attorney  
City of Sacramento  
915 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Request for Continuance of May 21, 2025 Commission Hearing Regarding  
Ordinance Listing 5850 Freeport Boulevard on the Sacramento Register of  
Historic and Cultural Resources (M24-014)  
5850 Freeport Boulevard, APN: 035-0034-016-0000**

Dear Commissioners and Staff:

I am writing on behalf of my client, AMF Bowling Centers, Inc. d/b/a AMF Land Park Lanes (“AMF”),<sup>1</sup> the tenant of the bowling alley located at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, to request a continuance of the above-referenced hearing until Wednesday, July 16, 2025.

**A. Overview.**

The bowling alley building was severely damaged by fire in February 2024 and was permanently closed at that time. Since then, the site has been continuously breached by trespassers, who have torn off tarps and other improvements installed to protect the building from rain, breached back entry roll-up doors, and removed virtually all electrical wiring as well as components of the HVAC systems (rendering them inoperable). The building continues to be subject to ongoing physical damage from weather and trespassers. We are working with City staff to obtain permits necessary to restore permanent power to the site and replace the roll-up doors in the back with secure vertical doors, which will enable AMF to secure the site with lights, cameras, and alarms that can signal law enforcement when further trespasses occur. These actions are necessary to render the site safe enough to allow AMF to take the steps referenced in Sacramento Municipal Code (SMC) section 17.604.800 to prevent further deterioration.

This work also will enable architects and engineers to safely inspect the site to assist in making a determination whether the building should be designated historic and whether it would be feasible to restore the building as a bowling alley. We accordingly request a continuance of the hearing on whether to recommend that the property be placed on the City’s historic register an additional two months, to July 18, 2025. AMF will use this time to process the above-described permit and restore power and security to the building, as well as to meet with staff in an effort to find a solution for this currently unusable site that is acceptable to all.

---

<sup>1</sup> AMF is affiliated with Lucky Strike Entertainment Corporation (formerly known as Bowlero Corp.), which previously submitted materials to the City regarding this matter.

Preservation Commissioners  
Sean de Courcy  
Whitney Johnson  
Michael Sparks  
May 20, 2025  
Page 2

**B. More Time Is Needed To Restore Power and Inspect the Site.**

After the building was permanently closed in February 2024, AMF sought a permit to demolish the structure in May 2024, but that permit is being held in abeyance by the City pending the outcome of the historic designation process. AMF is now in the process of seeking a permit to restore electrical power to the site and install vertical doors to replace the roll-up doors that are repeatedly breached by trespassers. We are in discussions with staff and moving as quickly as we can to resolve this issue, but need more time to address the matters described below.

The fundamental problem is that AMF cannot (and the City should not) determine whether the site is historic unless and until more information can be obtained. Without detailed inspections of a well-lit site, AMF cannot possibly determine what repairs are needed or even whether restoration is feasible. The evaluation of the building's potential for historic preservation cannot be addressed until these issues are resolved.

As noted, we are currently applying for permits to restore power and replace roll-up doors with vertical doors so that both the subsequent work referenced in SMC section 17.604.800 to preserve the building, and a thorough inspection can be conducted safely. AMF needs a permit to bring electricity to the site, so that AMF can install lights, cameras and alarms. Once automatic alarms can be installed, law enforcement can be alerted before future trespassers cause any further damage and steal the new wiring. Although staff has suggested on numerous occasions that generators be used instead of bringing power to the site, our contractors are refusing to enter the site without full electrical service, as it would not be safe. Moreover, the generators themselves would be stolen.

Without an assessment of the structural and functional integrity of the building, it is not possible to determine whether it retains any historic significance. None of the information currently before the Commission discusses how the site could retain any historic integrity in light of the fire, the water damage resulting from rains, the removal of wiring and HVAC equipment, and the other physical damage caused by trespassers. The proposed ordinance recites that the site retains its historical integrity today, but it cites only circumstances that existed "up until the point of the fire." The City and AMF need time for a full inspection of the building to develop more information regarding whether the site retains integrity and what options for restoration exist.

Finally, AMF understand the City is imposing fines of \$800 a month for failing to secure the site and make the repairs. Thus, the City is placing AMF in a fundamentally unfair "catch-22," where AMF is fined for not shoring up the site while not granting a permit necessary to shore up the site. We need additional time to engage City staff in discussions about these fines.

**C. More Time Is Needed To Conduct the Research and Analysis Needed to Determine Whether, If the Building Has Integrity, It Is Historic.**

We also request more time to allow Page & Turnbull, whom we have retained, to resolve the discrepancies amongst the historic reports and fill in the gaps where information is incomplete. The Commission should not make a recommendation based upon incomplete information.

Preservation Commissioners  
Sean de Courcy  
Whitney Johnson  
Michael Sparks  
May 20, 2025  
Page 3

As noted above, the reports and proposed Ordinance do not recite any facts supporting a conclusion that the building retains historical integrity despite its damage. The Brunzell report prepared for the Sacramento Historical Society and the proposed Ordinance also contain incomplete information regarding the supposed basis for the historical designation. There is no discussion of whether the referenced LGBTQ+ and Nisei Leagues were closely associated with this building, or whether the Leagues played at several bowling alleys. They likewise do not identify anything unique about this particular bowling alley. They rely on broad, generic statements that could apply to any property in the City. For example, the proposed ordinance states "The property is associated with the commercial development of the South Land Park area of Sacramento in the mid-twentieth century and with the transformation of Freeport Boulevard into a commercial corridor." However, every building in the City is "associated" with development of the area within it is located; there is nothing historic about being part of development. The conflicting report prepared for Lucky Strike (formerly known as Bowlero Corporation) confirms there is nothing unique about this bowling alley.

The information before the Commission is incomplete also in that it does not address whether, considering the property restrictions that would result from a historic designation, the designation would exceed constitutional takings limitations by requiring more investment than the property would be worth. This issue is further complicated by the fact that it is unclear what requirements would apply to the site if it were designated historic and to what extent the building could be remodeled or replaced.

#### **D. Conclusion.**

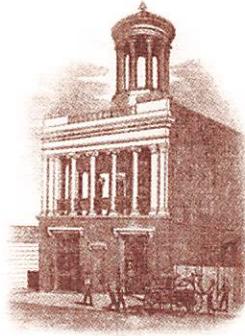
AMF has not taken (and the City should not take) a position regarding whether historic designation of the property is appropriate until both parties have more information about whether the building currently retains integrity, the detailed nature of its association with the Leagues referenced in the staff report, and whether the building can feasibly be restored. Obtaining that information will require discussions with City staff to overcome the issues that are preventing the City from issuing a power permit. These actions will take time. We accordingly request that the Commission's consideration of this matter be continued until July 2025.

Sincerely,



Cecily Barclay

cc: Steve Moroneso, Lucky Strike Entertainment  
David Clark, Lucky Strike Entertainment



Sacramento Regional Fire Museum  
P.O. Box 981524  
West Sacramento, CA 95798  
(916) 859-4181  
[www.sacfiremuseum.org](http://www.sacfiremuseum.org)

**November 26, 2024**

**Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811**

Hello Sean,

I am writing as a representative of the Pioneer Mutual Hook and Ladder Society DBA the Sacramento Regional Fire Museum. The Board of Directors support the historic preservation of the AMF Land Park Lanes building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy Wootton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a blue horizontal line through the end of the "t" and "n".

**Randy Wootton  
Board Chairman**

**From:** [Delta Mello](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Please SAVE the Land Park Bowl Building  
**Date:** Thursday, November 21, 2024 4:00:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Sean,

I am the current Executive Director/CEO of the Sacramento History Museum and I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The unique "space age" look of the front entrance was designed at the genesis of the JFK launched space-race era. The building design is not only historically architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The exceptional 148 foot interior prefabricated clear span design alone was, and remains historical today, and is worth preserving.

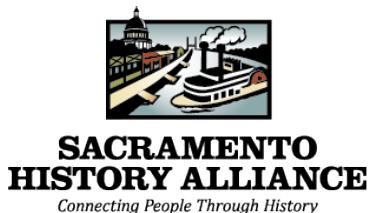
Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place for both genders to compete on common ground, and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese American communities. Culturally, the Sacramento riverfront had bowling (also known as tenpin) in bars and gambling halls as far back as the 1850's. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved. Let us not relive the loss of the Alhambra Theatre!

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

*Delta Pick Mello*  
(she/her)

*"The measure of intelligence is the ability to change." ---Albert Einstein*



**DELTA PICK MELLO**  
Executive Director/CEO  
916.808.7108 | cell 916.769.7678  
[dmello@sachistorymuseum.org](mailto:dmello@sachistorymuseum.org)  
101 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814.2204



**From:** [Gregg Lukenbill](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl Preservation  
**Date:** Thursday, November 21, 2024 4:23:06 PM

---

**Sean de Courcy**

**Preservation Director**

**Community Development Department**

**City of Sacramento**

**300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor**

**Sacramento, California 95811**

Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl ("Bowl") building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Built at the time of America's popularity pinnacle of bowling in 1960, the purpose built bowling alley building was a cornerstone of the post WWII south area Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom, in the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. At the genesis of the JFK launched space race, the building entrance had a unique 1960 space age look.

Land Park Bowl made Freeport Blvd. a family entertainment destination located just south of the Crossroads Shopping Center. The building design is not only historically architecturally significant, it is singularly unique, and a landmark in South Sacramento. The unique 148 foot interior prefabricated clear span design alone was, and remains historical today, and is worth preserving. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place for both genders to compete on common ground.

Both culturally and particularly historically, in gold rush Sacramento in the 1850's, the Sacramento river front had bowling (also known as tenpin back then) both within, and adjacent to, bars and gambling halls growing into a thriving industry until prohibition. It became a mainstay of family culture, leading to the Land Park Bowl building itself. The Land Park Bowl building is now the very last bowling alley in the entire City of Sacramento, and should be preserved. Shades of the infamous beloved Alhambra Theater City demolition for a grocery store potentially revisited.

To say that the building is not eligible is a ludicrous conclusion on the part of the Bowlero consultant. There is absolutely no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Gregg Lukenbill



# PRESERVATION SACRAMENTO

PO Box 162140, Sacramento CA 95816 – [preservation.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:preservation.sacramento@gmail.com) - [PreservationSacramento.org](http://PreservationSacramento.org)

---

December 6, 2024

Sean deCourcy, Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor,  
Sacramento, CA 95811

## **RE: Evaluation of Land Park Bowl**

Thank you for reaching out to careholders within the Sacramento historic preservation community regarding this property. The Board of Directors of Preservation Sacramento wishes to express our disagreement with the conclusions of the SWCA evaluation of the building performed on behalf of the property owner, and our agreement with the conclusions of the evaluation provided by Brunzell Historical on behalf of Sacramento Historical Society. The SWCA analysis failed to adequately consider the property's significance under Sacramento Register Criterion i, for its association with Sacramento's Japanese-American community, and its association with LGBTQ+ history. Its evaluation of the property under Criterion iii is also inaccurate, by misconstruing guidelines for evaluating bowling alleys for the SurveyLA project as minimum criteria for listing in the Sacramento Register. The property is eligible for listing in the Sacramento Register as a landmark, and therefore a historic resource for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act. Furthermore, the property should be considered for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under cover of the Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California Multiple Property Document for its association with Japanese Americans, due to its development by Toki and Gonzo Sakai, a Japanese-American *Issei* family, and with establishment of Nisei bowling leagues in Sacramento.

### **Criterion I: Japanese Americans and bowling leagues in Sacramento**

While the SWCA evaluation mentions building developer Gonzo Sakai, Sacramento's Japanese American community, and the issue of segregated bowling alleys in passing, it failed to connect these dots and discuss the development of bowling as a recreational activity among Japanese Americans. In 2018, the California Museum for History, Women and the Arts opened an exhibit named *Kokoro*, documenting Sacramento's Japanese American community during the era



# PRESERVATION SACRAMENTO

PO Box 162140, Sacramento CA 95816 – [preservation.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:preservation.sacramento@gmail.com) - [PreservationSacramento.org](http://PreservationSacramento.org)

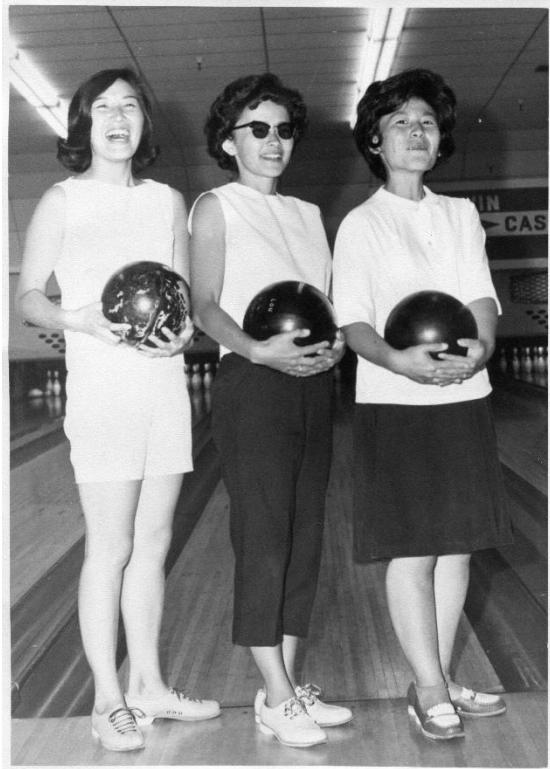


Figure 1: Members of Nisei bowling league, circa 1960, from collection of Alice Tsumura.

between imprisonment and redevelopment, that included photographs of sports activity including a Nisei women's bowling team from the collection of Alice Tsumura (see Figure 1.)

Nisei bowling leagues were discussed in Wayne Maeda's *Japanese Americans in the Sacramento Region* (Sacramento JACL, 2000, pp. 221-222), which mentions establishment of the first informal Nisei bowling leagues in 1938, 1946 establishment of the Nisei Bowling League at Capitol Bowl, and the efforts of this bowling league and Sacramento's Japanese American Citizens' League (JACL) to allow their membership in the American Bowling Congress (ABC). The Nisei Bowling League expanded into the Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association (SNBA), which included 15 different leagues. Until the fire that ceased its operations in 2024, the Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association still met at Land Park Bowl, a site they had used for decades, according to Darren Tsumura, a member of the league (ABC-10 interview, February 12, 2024,

<https://www.abc10.com/article/news/local/sacramento/bowling-alley-future-unclear/> ).

While Maeda references Forum Bowl and Capitol Bowl as early sites of Nisei bowling leagues, and El Rancho Bowl in West Sacramento as having been built by Japanese Americans, Land Park Bowl was the sole bowling alley in the city of Sacramento constructed by a Japanese-American developer, Yolo County farmer Gonzo Sakai, and utilized by Nisei bowling leagues until 2024. This combination of factors, including construction by a Japanese-American family, direct association with Nisei bowling leagues, and the association of those leagues with integration of national bowling associations, means Land Park Bowl is eligible for the Sacramento Register under Criterion i for association with Japanese-American history.

## LGBTQ+ Bowling Leagues

Sacramento's LGBTQ+ Historic Experience Project was approved by Sacramento's City Council on December 2, 2024. This report includes a historic context for LGBTQ+ sports and pastimes in Sacramento: *A gay and lesbian bowling league, the River City Bowlers, competed at the*



# PRESERVATION SACRAMENTO

PO Box 162140, Sacramento CA 95816 – [preservation.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:preservation.sacramento@gmail.com) - [PreservationSacramento.org](http://PreservationSacramento.org)

*Alhambra Bowl at 1229 Alhambra Boulevard. The league later met at Land Park Lanes at 5850 Freeport Boulevard (extant) and included a team of Black gay men and lesbians called “Four Brothas and a Sistah.” Members included Robert Jones, Steve Sykes, Asa Salley, John Ortiz-Hudson, and others. (Sacramento LGBTQ+ Historic Experience, 2024 Page & Turnbull, Page 126.) This statement was also independently verified by Dr. Will Green of East Sacramento Preservation on November 18, 2024, who had been a member of the league. This context statement establishes a framework for nominating historic resources for association with LGBTQ+ organizations, and this clearly demonstrated association with Land Park Bowl means the property is also eligible for the Sacramento Register under Criterion I for association with LGBTQ+ history.*

While the SWCA analysis utilized SurveyLA standards to analyze the building's historic integrity for purposes of its architecture, they did not include how SurveyLA evaluates bowling alleys based on association with events:

*Bowling centers may also be significant for their association with ethnic/cultural groups and may be discussed in the ethnic/cultural themes developed as part of the citywide historic context statement (see in particular the African American and the Japanese American Historic Contexts). (SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement, Commercial Development/Post WWII Recreation/Bowling Centers, 1949-1970, Page 2.)*

Land Park Bowl qualifies for listing under this standard, locally interpreted as Sacramento Register Criterion I, *even if the building does not qualify for local listing for its architecture*. However, the building is also eligible for listing for its architecture, as detailed below.

### **Land Park Bowl's Googie Architecture (Criterion iii)**

SWCA's finding of ineligibility is based on differences between a pre-construction rendering and the as-built design of the building, and absence of the bowling alley sign. A public comment letter submitted by SacMod on December 4, 2024, makes three points to support eligibility under Criterion iii. First, while signage is often a character-defining feature of mid-century bowling alley design, its absence does not disqualify a building from consideration. Second, it is the as-built building that should be considered when evaluating historic integrity of a building, not differences between pre-construction renderings and what was actually built; using the correct basis, the building retains a high degree of historic integrity, and its evaluation of the building as a simple rectangular form with Googie designs attached is the basis of most examples of Googie architecture. Finally, SWCA excluded SurveyLA's mention that *Extant post-war bowling centers are now rare; therefore, a greater degree of alteration or fewer character defining features may be acceptable. Some design features may have been modified, altered, or replaced*.



# PRESERVATION **SACRAMENTO**

PO Box 162140, Sacramento CA 95816 – [preservation.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:preservation.sacramento@gmail.com) - [PreservationSacramento.org](http://PreservationSacramento.org)

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*Adjacent setting may have changed.* (SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement, Commercial Development/Post WWII Recreation/Bowling Centers, 1949-1970, Page 22.) Preservation Sacramento supports SacMod's conclusions regarding the building's eligibility.

Regarding the evaluation's findings that the property lists no architect of record, it is not necessary to identify a named architect for a property to be eligible under Criterion iii, so the lack of an architect of record does not preclude eligibility. Finally, the statement by SWCA that better examples of Mid-century Modern bowling alleys exist, such as Country Club Lanes in Arden-Arcade, does not preclude eligibility of this building, especially because their local example (Country Club Lanes) is located outside the city limits, and therefore *is not eligible* for listing in the Sacramento Register. By contrast, while being the sole building of its type does not necessarily make a building eligible for listing in the Sacramento Register, **Land Park Bowl is the last surviving bowling alley located within the Sacramento city limits. It is the last building of its kind in the city.**

For these reasons, we ask the Preservation Director to return a finding that Land Park Bowl is eligible for listing in the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources under Criterion i in the areas of Ethnic History (Japanese) and LGBTQ+ History, and Criterion iii as a locally significant example of Googie architecture.

Sincerely,

William Burg  
President, Preservation Sacramento



# Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522

December 13, 2024

Sean de Courcy, Preservation Director  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Boulevard Sacramento, CA 95811

## **Re: Land Park Bowl aka Land Park Lanes - 5850 Freeport Boulevard**

Dear Sean,

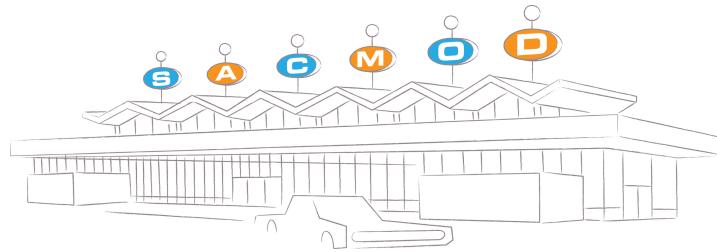
I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese American communities.

Firefighters swear to protect life and property, this is exactly what Sacramento Area Firefighters did at Land Park Lanes. The building was saved from the fire, and we hope it will remain an iconic part of Sacramento.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, but also a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento and should be preserved. There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Respectfully submitted,

Trevor Jamison, President  
Dustin Rodrigues, Secretary Treasurer  
Jeremy Crawford, Director of Membership  
Ryan Henry, Sacramento City Vice President  
Sean Scollard, Metro Vice President  
Bryant Powell, Cosumnes Vice President  
Greg Fonts, District Vice President  
John Collins, Sacramento City Director  
Jeremy Gardella, Sacramento City Director  
Pete Votava, Metro Director  
Michael Gildone, Metro Director



December 4, 2024

Sean de Courcy, Preservation Director  
City of Sacramento Community Development Department  
300 Richards Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**Submitted via e-mail**

**Re: Land Park Bowl aka Land Park Lanes - 5850 Freeport Boulevard**

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the evaluations conducted by SWCA Environmental Consultants (for Bolero Corporation - October 2024) and Brunzell Historical (for the Sacramento Historical Society - November 2024). We reviewed both reports with great interest, as this Mid-Century Modern Googie bowling alley has been well-loved by the community for 64 years. There was a large outcry when the interior was damaged earlier this year. However, the bowling alley's character-defining exterior features remain intact. There is much hope that the building can be rehabilitated or adaptively reused and remain as an example of Googie architecture. It is located on a southern stretch of Freeport Boulevard's commercial corridor in South Land Park that is dotted with many prominent Mid-Century Modern buildings. Of note, Land Park Bowl is the last extant mid-20th century bowling alley within the City of Sacramento.

As you know, Sacramento Modern (SacMod) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2010; we are dedicated to preserving modern art, architecture, and design in the Sacramento region. We co-sponsored the 2017 Sacramento Mid-Century Modern Historic Context Statement and Survey.\* While Land Park Bowl was not specifically mentioned in the Survey, it remains a Mid-Century Modern Googie building that meets more than one criteria to qualify it as an eligible historic resource.

Although SWCA's evaluation is well-written, it incorrectly asserts that the building's eligibility is diminished because: 1) the site's original signage is absent, and; 2) the building does not look *exactly* like the rendering in a newspaper advertisement. However, neither of these conditions preclude the building's significance. And — as many in the building industry can attest — not every structure ultimately appears *exactly* as originally conceptualized or rendered.

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, preserving and protecting modern art, architecture and design in the Sacramento region.

Gretchen Steinberg 4910 South Land Park Drive, Sacramento, CA 95822  
[gretchen@SacMod.org](mailto:gretchen@SacMod.org)  
[SacMod.org](http://SacMod.org)

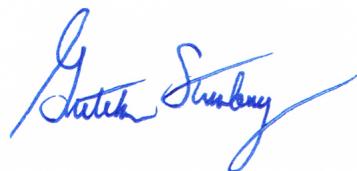
Also, SWCA's evaluation applies Los Angeles' Survey LA criteria to a Sacramento building — which seems problematic since Survey LA's standards are slightly different from those developed by Sacramento to evaluate eligibility of a Googie building. While SWCA's report is well-researched, we disagree with some of their analyses and conclusions which are based upon their arbitrary application of eligibility criteria. Even if Survey LA's evaluation criteria for bowling alleys are considered applicable, they include the following caveat: "Extant post-war bowling centers are now rare; therefore a greater degree of alteration or fewer character-defining features may be acceptable. Some design features may have been modified, altered, or replaced...."

We concur with the overall analyses and conclusions in Brunzell Historical's evaluation. While Brunzell's report is more succinct, it clearly identifies the building's qualifying features, integrity, and context; and accurately applies eligibility criteria for evaluating a Mid-Century Modern Googie historic resource.

We would like to underscore the building's significance for both the Asian and LGBTQ+ communities — who formed groups such as the Sacramento Nisei Bowling League/Association and the River City Bowlers. Both leagues found Land Park Bowl to be a welcoming space to gather and recreate beginning in the 1960s and 1970s and onward for decades until the recent interior damage occurred. SacMod is happy to share our research findings. Please also refer to the photo and SacMod's observations on Page 3 of this letter that identify the building's original and intact Googie features in detail.

In conclusion, we are writing in support of listing the property as a historic resource and urge you to pursue historic status. It is our opinion that there is sufficient evidence that Criterion A/1/a1 and Criterion C/3/a.iii - v are met and that the former Land Park Bowl building retains sufficient integrity and original features to include it on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources.

Respectfully submitted,



Gretchen Steinberg  
President, SacMod

\* For those unfamiliar with the Sacramento Mid-Century Modern Context and Survey, it can be found here:  
<https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/community-development/planning/preservation/mid-century-modern>

The context statement/survey was made possible from over \$66,000 in grant funding, with support from the California Office of Historic Preservation and matching funds from SacMod. The one-year project was overseen in partnership with the City of Sacramento's Preservation Office within the Community Development Department. A historical consulting team led by GEI Consulting with Mead & Hunt conducted extensive evaluations of five properties and wrote the final report that included information from SacMod's research files. The survey was conducted by community volunteers. The project was intended as a starting point to identify mid-20th century historical resources and define styles for future historical evaluations. Rather than being a definitive and all-inclusive encyclopedia, it was intended to be a catalyst to identify and protect Mid-Century Modern resources within the City of Sacramento.



*Land Park Bowl, aka Land Park Lanes is a Mid-Century Modern bowling alley located at 5850 Freeport Boulevard, on a commercial corridor in Sacramento's South Land Park neighborhood. It retains many original features and characteristics consistent with mid-20th century Googie architecture. Photo by Debra Jane Selzer via her website [Roadside Architecture](#).*

Original Googie features, materials, and characteristics of Land Park Bowl/Lanes include:

- an exuberant custom triangular steel sculpture made of solid and diamond grille screen elements. The sculpture perpendicularly intersects the large front awning and rises vertically above the roofline like a rocket taking flight for outer space — intentionally designed to capture the attention of passing motorists;
- a dramatic, exaggerated angular soffit/overhang on the front elevation; this soffit is supported by freestanding poles and is punctured by a trapezoidal open space that allows natural light into the entrance. The overhang and adjacent soffits contain built-in downward facing light fixtures that illuminate the front perimeter of the building at night;
- irregular rectilinear massing and multiple planes with abstract and angular portions;
- an asymmetrical façade that conveys movement;
- flat rectilinear awnings above the front and side entrances supported by angular poles;
- several geometric elements (rectangles, diamonds, triangles, trapezoid);
- a variety of materials, including steel, glass, aluminum, concrete, and cement blocks;
- three cinder block wall enclosures: one with solid cement blocks and vents; one with solid cement blocks topped with the same diamond grille screen material used in the triangular sculpture; and one composed of decorative screen blocks. The decorative screen blocks have an open diamond pattern consistent with Basalite's Harlequin pattern. The front entry wall with double glass doors is also composed of solid cement blocks.
- Both the solid and decorative screen blocks were likely acquired from a nearby legacy business: Blomberg's Basalite Distributors — aka Blomberg Building Materials / Blomberg Builders (now Blomberg Window Systems) on Blair Avenue.

**From:** [larry schluer](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** 5850 Freeport Blvd.  
**Date:** Sunday, November 24, 2024 9:50:59 AM

---

Hello Mr. de Courcy,

I recently heard the Land Park Bowl building is slated for demolition. Please consider the retention of this building as a significant historical building in Sacramento.

Born and raised in East Sacramento, I have always enjoyed classic structures, like the Tower and Crest Theaters and the aesthetics they bring to the community. I have spent many hours in the old Alhambra Theater before its demolition, a huge loss to the community.

Spending many hours in this bowling alley in my high school years, I am quite familiar with the massive openness of the structure, only to stand in the shadow of the front exterior that pairs so nicely with the Art Deco theme of the airport across the street. The facade represents not just a by-gone era in Sacramento, but is a significant, historical element as the last bowling alley building in Sacramento. This building is a gem and being so close to the Executive Airport can substantially anchors both locations to encourage socio-economic growth and development in the area.

Since 1948...

Thank you,  
Larry Schluer

**From:** [Mr Marvin Lane](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** AMF Land Park Bowling Alley  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 2:47:14 PM

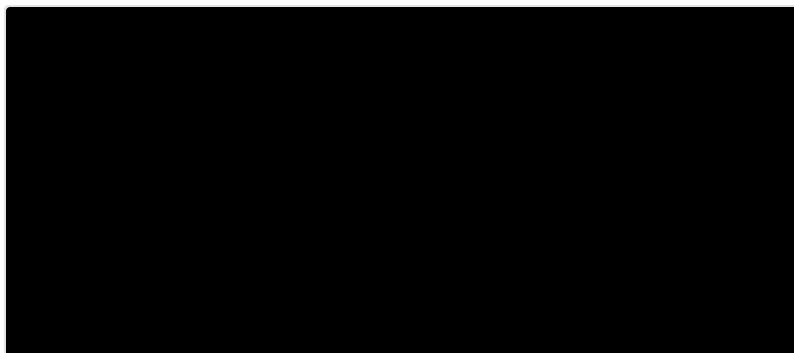
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Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

I myself, have been bowling at Land Park Bowl off and on for the last 30 plus years with the last 10 years solely at Land Park. At the time of the fire I was in a league called the CSEA Thursday Mixed League which had been around since 1968 beginning at South Bowl then moving to Alpine and then to Land Park after the closure of Alpine; the league had to fold after 55 plus years of existence. Land Park is basically the only alley in the South Sacramento/Elk Grove area that offered league bowling every day of the week. Without it many people either relocated to other alleys farther away or quit bowling altogether like my team has. I think it is a vital part of the community.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is [the very last](#) bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.



### Google Maps

Find local businesses, view maps and get driving directions in Google Maps.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Marvin Lane  
8169 La Almendra Way Sacramento, CA 95823  
Marvin (I have no cruise control) Lane  
marvinl709@aol.com

**From:** AOL Mail  
**To:** Sean deCourcy  
**Subject:** Historic Preservation Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 11:33:02 AM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Rick Goishi  
9004 Chaff CT  
Elk Grove, CA 95758

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

**From:** [Kamilah Washington](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Historic Preservation of Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 8:10:06 AM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
[300 Richards Boulevard](#), Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

My family and I have been bowling league and tournaments at Land Park Bowl since we arrived in the Sacramento area in 2011. Not only has this location been a staple in the community since my mother was a child growing up here in Sacramento in the 60's and 70's, fast forward 40 + years and it still was making an impact in young peoples lives. My two children, both bowled Youth leagues here, and really fell in love with the sport, earning SMART program scholarships through the jr leagues at Landpark, and continuing into adulthood, giving them a safe place to be, learning how to improve with practice, and learning how to be teamplayers. The sport of bowling offers many avenues, whether through fitness, discipline, or college scholarships, that it should definitely be able to continue to provide in the South Area of Sacramento. So many opportunities for the community will be lost if Land Park Bowl does remain close. Please consider not only the past history , but the present and future that this will affect .

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Kamilah Washington  
8865 La Riveria Drive #C  
Sacramento, CA 95826

*Kamilah E. Washington*  
510-692-0132  
*Have a great day!!!*

Notice: Information contained within this email is intended for the sole use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential, and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any use, distribution, dissemination in any manner, or copying of this transmission is prohibited by law and may result in the imposition of civil or criminal penalties. If you have received this transmission in error, please delete it and notify the individual or department noted above by telephone, or return the entire transmission via U.S. Mail. Thank you.

**From:** [pattie fong](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Historical designation of Land Park Bowl building  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 9:32:49 AM

---

I support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. It should be preserved not only for its period architectural features but also for its historical significance as the last bowling alley in the city and its popularity as a gathering point for the Sacramento Japanese American communities.

Pattie Fong

**From:** [Dan Fong](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 3:17:31 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I strongly support the historical preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl is the only bowling alley in the south area. It was a bowling alley that I frequented to bowl when I would travel from Yuba City on Friday night. There were always bowlers participating in leagues from 6pm to 1130pm. There are no other bowling alleys in the south area. It is a unique landmark in south Sacramento. Bowlers from the south area now have to travel much farther to find family entertainment. This building should be preserved.

Sincerely,  
Dan Fong  
751 Westlite Circle  
Sacramento CA 95831

**From:** [ilene frank](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 1:40:34 PM

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Mr. Sean de Courcy

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities and much more.

My family (several hundred) and I have bowled there since the 60's. I was born and raised in South Sacramento/Elk Grove and Land Park Bowl has been our entertainment and exercise with family gatherings, social and community events. Land Park Bowl was the last Bowling Alley in South Sacramento. We have know where else to go in the south area. Everyone that bowled the leagues there were like family and we are all now separated. Please see that building as an historic site as it is almost as old as I am (70). The bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Ilene T. Frank

9042 Weeping Fig Way  
Elk Grove, CA 95758  
(916) 761-3247

**From:** [rick kerksieck](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 3:32:04 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

My Family, and I have been bowling at this alley since the early 2000's. I have been a league bowler, and have attended numerous birthday, and family celebrations there. I think it would be a shame to let this building be destroyed.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Rick Kerksieck  
618 Lelandhaven way, Sacramento CA 95831.

**From:** [Karen Narduzzi](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 2:18:01 PM

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Preserve this landmark! Not only is it a landmark, it served the community as a place for families to come together for entertainment (bowling, video games etc. This is a huge deal, please, please take the community to heart and do not remove such an ICON.

Thank you!

Karen Narduzzi  
10151 Festa Ct.  
Elk Grove, Ca 95757  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [S.S](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 1:14:43 PM

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Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

It is a wonderful experience and way for communities and families to meet and share valuable time together.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,  
Shawn Lin

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

**From:** [Michele](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2024 9:54:18 AM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#)

Growing up in South Sac during my teen years this was always a place to go and hang out. And now that I am a senior I had fallen in love with it again. It was a game I was able to pick up quickly and gave me an opportunity to socialize. We need this Bowling alley for it is a place that every age group can enjoy.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is [the very last](#) bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Michele Spagnolo  
1304 Meadow Rd  
West Sacramento

Sent from Michele's iPhone

**From:** [Greta Wallace](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 6:21:36 PM

---

I grew up in Land Park and moved back to my family home in LP. My family used the bowling alley. I will use it again. Please save it.

Greta Gross Wallace  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [h\\_yee](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl building  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 5:15:17 PM

---

Hello Mr. de Courcy

I'm writing to support the historical preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. It's an architecturally, culturally & historical building and meets CEQA requirements. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Herman Yee  
4080 Deer Trail Way 95823

**From:** [Nancy Lum](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land park bowl building  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 7:37:37 PM

---

Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

PLEASE keep this Land Park Bowl building. Many of us have been bowling here for many years!! This is have been land mark for many of us!!!!

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Nancy Lum

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [GEORGE PADOVAN](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl Building Preservation  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 6:37:45 AM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's **Japanese-American communities**.

I have had the pleasure to bowl in this establishment for over 40 years dating back to the early 1980's. The fire that closed this establishment in early 2024 was devastated to all who frequently bowled at Land Park but especially the senior bowlers who were in there 70 - 90-year-olds that live close to this establishment, and this was their only place for them to bowl and stay active in their later years and also a place for social activities which are somewhat limited in the South Sacramento region. Many of these members of our city were Japanese Americans who no longer have the ability to travel the necessary distance outside our city to continue to bowl.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is **the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento and should be preserved!**

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

George Padovan  
40 Del Vista Circle  
Sacramento, CA 95823

**From:** [Calvin Okimura](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 12:06:29 PM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
[300 Richards Boulevard](#), Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

<<<Insert your personal experience here>>>

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Calvin Okimura  
8664 Grimsby Ct.  
Elk Grove, CA 95624

**From:** [Irene Nabeta-Yee](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Bowling Alley  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 3:15:59 PM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
[300 Richards Boulevard](#), Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

When I first moved to Sacramento, I bowled at South Bowl Alley on Stockton Blvd. Then South Bowl was demolished. Then my league moved to Alpine Alley on Florin Road. Alpine Alley closed due to asbestos. Then I moved to Land Park Alley. Now, Land Park Alley is burnt and may no longer be there. We would like Land Park to be rebuilt because there are no other bowling alleys in South Sacramento. If Land Park can remain as a bowling alley, then the youth can use it as another segway to bowling.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Irene Nabeta-Yee  
916-524-8968 Cell

**From:** [Steve Guest](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land Park Lanes  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2024 7:22:42 PM

---

Sean, I am reaching out to you to send my support in designating the currently damaged, and unoccupied Land Park lanes on Freeport Blvd a historic site.

I bowled there for the first time when i was 15 in 1975. At the time of the fire, i was bowling several senior leagues with hundreds of us meeting weekly to enjoy good exercise and cammaraderie.

This venue is deeply missed by so many bowlers, primarily senior citizens. Please do anything and everything humanly possible to save this site.

Thank you for your time.

Steve Guest  
Sacramento

**From:** [Brian Roberts](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Land park lanes bowling alley  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 1:14:32 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

<<<Insert your personal experience here>>>

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Brian William Roberts  
17 Raindrop Ct  
Sacramento California 95823

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

**From:** [Kathy Omachi](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of the Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 5:49:55 PM

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Dear Sir., I am writing in support to preserve the Land Park Bowling Alley. I realize that it is a bit unusual to request ,the preservation of a bowling alley as a historical land mark but we must acknowledge its historical significance to the community life of the local Japanese-Americans and the [region](#) as a safe place to gather. Our community was still recovering from the hatred of World War II and the on-going racism and discrimination as reflected in the Land Park Asian homeowners exclusion actions.

As representatives of the Fresno Chinatown Preservation, Inc organization we are well aware of the need to preserve all aspects of a historic community such as a Japanese confectionary shop, a Basque Hand Ball Court or a Mexican Baptist Church. These properties, such as the Land Park Bowl, preserve for our future generations a true sense of where they came from and just who were their ancestors. Thank you for all your efforts to help preserve our history.

Ms. Kathy Omachi, MSW

uc Berkeley/1976

**From:** [John Schwartzler](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Permit Request to Demolish Land Park Lanes  
**Date:** Thursday, December 5, 2024 12:13:13 PM

---

Attn: Sean De Courcy  
Sacramento City Community Development Dept.  
300 Richard's Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dec. 5, 2024

RE : Land Park Lanes at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Sacramento

It has come to my attention that Bowlero Corp. has applied for a Permit to demolish the Land Park Lanes Bowling Alley at 5850 Freeport Blvd. in Sacramento. We've lived in the area since 1967 and have enjoyed Bowling and Parties at Land Park Lanes over the years. It always has been a Community gathering place for Events. Considering it's unique Design and Location in the Land Park neighborhood, The Structure needs to be preserved to once again provide the Local Community a place to meet together for Celebrations and Events, as few locations exist that can provide for large gatherings.

Please consider these Impacts on our Neighborhood when you respond to the Permit Request.

Thank You,  
John & Sandy Schwartzler  
(916) 316-5056

**From:** [Ras533@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Ras533@sbcglobal.net)  
**To:** [Sean.deCourcy](mailto:Sean.deCourcy)  
**Subject:** Please help SAVE Land Park Bowl Building  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 5:33:56 PM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
[300 Richards Boulevard](http://300RichardsBoulevard), Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd](http://5850FreeportBlvd). Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

I have been bowling in Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association (SNBA) leagues at Land Park Bowl since the early 1980's. Before that, when I was younger, I used to go bowl there with friends. It was a safe place to go to spend time with my friends, and a close and convenient place as I grew up in the Hollywood Park area. I now live in the Pocket area, as well as many of my Nisei league bowling friends. We were devastated when the fire occurred and then finding out that Bowlmor had no intentions of renovating the building.

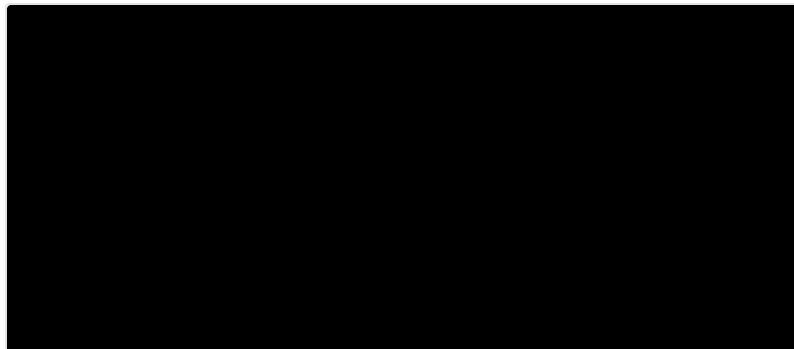
The SNBA was created in the late 1940's after the Japanese-Americans were released from the Internment camps, as a way to get together. They suffered many hardships at the beginning as local bowling establishments would not allow them to enter. There was 1 (one) proprietor that allowed them to bowl and the Association was created and grew from there. We have since lost many of our Nisei (2nd generation) bowlers. Our current membership consists mainly of 3rd generation bowlers, with some 4th generation bowlers getting interested in bowling.

Land Park Bowl is the last bowling alley in the South Sacramento area. With the closure of South Bowl, and then Alpine Valley Lanes, our SNBA leagues have been reduced in number, as well as our Association members. After the closure of Alpine Valley Lanes, and having to move all of our leagues that were there to Land Park, we had at least 1 (one) league every night of the week (Monday through Friday) at Land Park.

With the closure of Land Park, our SNBA leagues have had to scramble to find a place where most of our Association members were willing to go to. As many live in the Greenhaven/Pocket and Elk Grove areas, many have opted to quit bowling as they do not want to drive all the way out to Country Club Lanes. Especially our Senior members, who do not want to drive on the freeway and/or at night. As it is, Country Club was only able to accommodate one Mens league (4 bowlers per team) on Friday night, and 3 (three) of our mixed leagues (4 bowlers per team) combined into 1 (one) league on Sunday, losing members who also did not want to bowl on a Sunday (family time). One other Mens league was also able to get into Country Club on Sundays, but lost a lot of league bowlers due to the day of the week changing to Sundays and the location. They also had to drop down to a trios format (3 bowlers per team). The 1 (one) Womens league had to go to The Alley in Elk Grove (does not cater to leagues). Most of the Womens league members did not want to drive out to Country Club.

Please help to save Land Park Bowl. To be renovated so that we can possibly move back "home", where we feel more comfortable. It is also a safer drive for our Association members.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park Bowl](#) building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.



There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

#### Google Maps

Find local businesses, view maps and get driving directions in Google Maps.

Thank you for your time in reading this email.

Sincerely,

Karen Nakao  
7356 Souza Circle  
Sacramento, CA 95831

**From:** Ishmael Bihl  
**To:** Sean deCourcy  
**Subject:** Please save Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 10:49:23 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

**It was also home to the River City Bowlers league before the fire. The oldest LGBTQ+ league in Sacramento and Northern California for over 40 years!**

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Ishmael Bihl  
River City Bowlers, league President  
4306 Ocean Lane  
Elk Grove, CA 95757

May 19, 2025

City of Sacramento Preservation Commission  
915 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RCVD CITY CLERK OFFICE  
MAY 27 '25 PM2:04

RE: Ordinance Listing 5850 Freeport Boulevard on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources

To whom it may concern,

I am currently the president of River City Bowlers, the oldest ongoing LGBTQ+ bowling league in Sacramento.

The River City Bowlers bowling league was established in 1977 at a smaller bowling alley named Alhambra Bowl that only had 16 lanes. When the LGBTQ+ community became aware of this league supporting their interest, the league increased to 44 teams comprised of 5 members (220 bowlers) the next year so it had to move to the Land Park Lanes. Land Park Lanes has 32 lanes which required the league to have 2 shifts from 3-9 pm. The following year the league size had to be condensed to only 32 teams and continued at this size for several years.

This league became an important gathering place for the LGBTQ+ community and helped to create and organize other LGBTQ+ sports. The bowling members joined IGBO (International Gay Bowling Organization) and the league participated in the first Gay Games in San Francisco in 1982. Our River City Bowlers league has continued to have a positive impact in the Sacramento area LGBTQ+ community.

The River City Bowlers league has always raised funds to support the Bowling to Veterans Link (BVL) and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Land Park Lanes has always welcomed and supported our marginalized community and has always been our home until the recent fire that forced us to relocate to another bowling alley and has survived with only 14 current teams.

PLEASE save Land Park Lanes, our home. We want to come home.

Sincerely,



Ishmael Bihl

River City Bowlers, president

**From:** [Michael Ota](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Preservation of Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 3:57:22 PM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities. My family has had countless family bowling events and cherished memories at this location since the 1970's.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Michael Ota  
2368 Glen Ellen Circle  
Sacramento 95822

**From:** [Carol Patton](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Preservation of Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 5:35:33 PM

---

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American and all bowlers in the outlying communities. I have lived in Sacramento all my life and have bowled at South Bowl, Alpine Alley, both close. There is no bowl near. I have been a bowler, for well over 50 years. Every Thursday night, and had not missed a Thursday, in that 50 years. I am in my 70's and and do not wish to travel a far distance to be able to bowl.especially at night.

It is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

This email is on behalf of my 32 member league called CSEA Mixed. It was a league that bowled in Sacramento for over 60 years. It was started by a group of California State Employees, and was originally housed at South Bowl on Stockton Blvd.

Thank You

Carol Patton  
4324 62ns Street  
Sacramento, CA 95820

**From:** [Manila Vongmany](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 11:27:50 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd](#). Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

I bowled at Land Park Bowl for more than 10 years and have formed wonderful friendships through the bowling community there. Many of these friends were even at my wedding, and I cherish the lifelong memories I've made at this special place. Land Park Bowl has always been more than just a bowling alley—it's a place where people connect and share a love for the sport.

Since the fire damaged Land Park Bowl, our league was moved to Country Club Lanes, but Sunday was the only available day, which is inconvenient and disrupts weekend plans. The location is also much farther away, making it less accessible for many of us.

I strongly encourage you to designate Land Park Bowling as a historic landmark to preserve its legacy and ensure it remains a cherished part of our community.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,  
Manila Vongmany

**From:** [Jody Tao](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 7:19:27 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

I have bowled at Land Park Bowl since 1976. After retiring in the Seattle area my wife and I decided to return back to Sacramento in 2017. As a senior we started bowling in the Nisei and non-Nisei bowling leagues at AMF Land Park Bowl three times a week Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. This was our connection to get back to knowing our Japanese-American community and the south area community in the Sacramento area. Without this social connection, I think it would have been difficult to get involved with the community. We are very grateful to have that opportunity at AMF Land Park Bowl and we would like it to continue to others so they can make friends in the community.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Jody Tao  
8708 Cooperston Way

Elk Grove, CA 95624

**From:** [Michael Kawasaki](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Preserving Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2024 10:21:37 AM

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Good morning Mr. de Courcy,

I'm writing in support to historically preserve the Land Park Bowl building on Freeport Boulevard. The building (and people) have been a staple in our community for over 30 years. The location was family friendly and it was the only last standing entertainment locations in our area. West Sacramento has Capitol Bowl, Arden has Country Club, Citrus Heights has Bowlero North and Elk Grove has The Alley but what about us? Many of those bowling alleys are on the outskirts of Sacramento and we are trying to save the one last good thing on Freeport Blvd. I grew up just down the street and remember riding my bike with friends to head down to the alley just to bowl a few games. As we've grown and moved away, it became a place to meet and catch up with old friends while bowling with our kids and families. I hope you can help save and bring back to life one of the last buildings in the area that was a staple in our community.

Sincerely,  
Michael Kawasaki

**From:** [J. H](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Preservation of Land Park Bowl on Freeport Boulevard  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 3:35:12 PM

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Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
[300 Richards Boulevard](#), Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

**My wife and I remember bringing our daughters to Land Park Bowl to sell Girl Scout cookies to many of the bowlers, easily thirty + years ago! And, we got to marvel at the age of the bowlers. Back then, many were in mid-to-late 50s and 60s!**

**I also joined the Nisei Bowling League three years ago in order to bowl with my then, 89 year old mother-in-law. Yes, she is AWESOME and easily out scores me. It's been over 40 years since I last picked up a bowling ball...**

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Robert H.

PO Box 954  
Shingle Springs, CA 95682

**From:** [Bill](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Save Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 8:50:02 AM

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Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

Being a league and recreational bowler, Land Park Bowl is the last bowling center in South Sacramento. South Bowl and Alpine Alley had closed. I had friends bowling on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Sacramento Nisei Bowling Association (SNBA) would have tournaments at this location.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

William (Bill) Kitagawa  
9 Las Positas Circle  
Sacramento, CA 95831

**From:** [Gladys Kawaye](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** SAVE Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2024 5:44:48 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Boulevard.

I used to go with my relatives to watch them bowl weekly. Since then, I have bowled in many leagues, some at Land Park Bowl. Many Issei and Nisei families bowled in leagues at Land Park Bowl. The Chinese leagues have also been present for years at Land Park Bowl.

My late sister-in-law worked at Land Park Bowl for many years and recruited me when they were short handed. I worked there part time for over twenty-five years. I was working the morning of the fire at Land Park Bowl. There are so many memories held within those walls and I would hate to see the building demolished. I still drive by on occasion and feel great sadness seeing it boarded up as it is now. It would be wonderful if the building could be saved and restored.

Sincerely,

Gladys Kawaye

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Ray Valdovino](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Save Land Park Bowl  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 10:41:02 AM

---

Dear Mr. de Courcey

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

In 1976 while attending Sacramento City College, I had the privilege of working at Land Park Bowl as a Front Desk Attendant. At the time, Land Park Bowl was owned by the Brunswick Corporation. My job consisted of flooring the nightly leagues, accepting each league secretaries lineage fees, making nightly bank deposits and securing that everything was locked and alarmed before closing for the evening. Those were just a few of my duties.

One of my main reasons for getting a job at Land Park Bowl was to be able to practice for free because I knew I wanted to become a professional bowler. After I got off from those early morning shifts, I would also help the lane man with his duties so that I could get some much needed practice in. Having the opportunity to practice for free and understand lane maintenance and oil patterns (with the expertise help of the lane man) I became one of the best bowlers in the area. I also opened up my business (Ray's Pro Shop) in 1976 so I could understand every aspect of the game inside and out. I eventually earned my PBA card (Professional Bowlers Association) and have had a very successful career that is still going to this day. I have one PBA title, I was the number one seed for a PBA National event at Earl Anthony's Bowl in nearby Dublin, California which was televised on ESPN and I was also voted into the Sacramento Bowling Hall of Fame. Had it not been for Land Park Bowl, my life could have been totally different. I even met my wife Donna, while I worked at Land Park Bowl. We have been married for 37 years and we have one beautiful daughter. The Nisei Bowling Organization which I have been a member of for almost 50 years also helped me become the bowler and person I am today. The Nisei leagues and it's entire bowling community has been a staple at Land Park Bowl and I would be forever indebted to you if you could somehow find a way to save Land Park Bowl.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Ray Valdovino

519 Shaw River Way

Sacramento, CA 95831

December 11, 2024

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
[300 Richards Boulevard](http://300RichardsBoulevard.com), Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](http://5850FreeportBlvd.com) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

I have fond memories of bowling classes at Land Park Bowl when taking physical education classes at Sacramento City College in the early 1970's. It was a special place to have church bowling events and socialize with bowlers in the Japanese American leagues.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](http://LandParkBowl.com) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Walter Menda  
622 Lelandhaven Way  
Sacramento, CA 95831

**From:** [Roger Fujii](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Save Land Park Bowl building  
**Date:** Sunday, December 8, 2024 8:17:45 AM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

<<<Insert your personal experience here>>>

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Roger Fujii

3894 W Land Park Dr

Sacramento 95822

916-708-7343

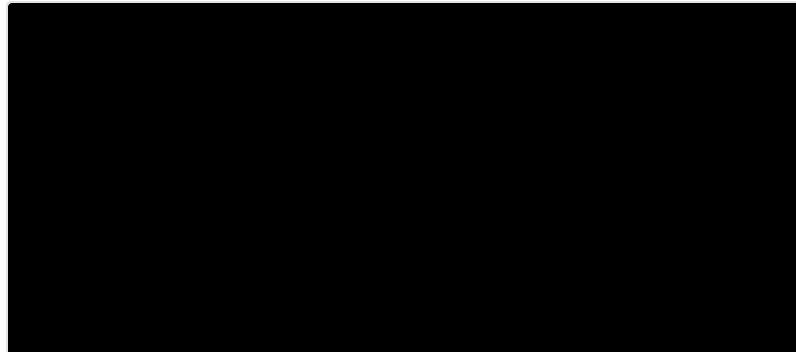
**From:** [mary okamoto](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** SAVE Land Park Bowl Building  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 9:20:22 AM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd.](#) Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.



### Google Maps

Find local businesses, view maps and get driving directions in Google Maps.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Mary Okamoto  
Sacramento, CA 95818

**From:** [Marie Reichmuth](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** SAVE Land Park Bowl Building  
**Date:** Monday, December 9, 2024 5:14:06 PM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

Over my lifetime, I have bowled there for over 30 years. And my recent stay of 11 years, was spent as a widow after losing my husband of 15 years. It wasn't easy walking into this bowling alley and asking to be put on an unknown team to start a new chapter in my life and do something I used to do as a single person. I met the most welcoming people and team members, and gained many lasting friendships too. It was the best thing I could have done to go forward in my life, get out of the house, and stop the depression that sets in when you lose a spouse, friend or family member.

Please consider bringing this bowling alley back to life, and save other people's lives too!

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

*Marie L. Reichmuth*  
9044 Ancestor Dr.  
Elk Grove, CA 95758

**From:** [Lillie R](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** SAVE Land Park Bowl building!  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 3:09:03 PM

---

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at [5850 Freeport Blvd](#). Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

I have been bowling in various leagues through the Nissei Bowling Association since the early 70's. I am 92 years old.. I would like to see the building rebuilt in order to return to these lanes. It's a convenient location and holds many memories...

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The [Land Park](#) Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Lillie R.  
Sacramento, 95820

**From:** [Barry Tsugawa](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Historic Preservation of the Land Park Bowl Building  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 11, 2024 6:05:50 AM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

Land Park Bowl supported many Nisei (2nd Generation) bowlers when it first opened.

I have memories of the family watching my dad compete in a competitive Nisei bowling league. The best one was when he captained a team that won the league. I later joined with my dad in a Nisei league and bowled the only 300 game in the long history of the league.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

Barry Tsugawa  
1403 Greenborough Dr.  
Roseville, CA 95661  
Ph: 916 622-6770

**From:** [John Yoshikawa](#)  
**To:** [Sean deCourcy](#)  
**Subject:** Save Land Park Bowl!  
**Date:** Saturday, December 7, 2024 11:12:23 PM

---

Sean de Courcy  
Preservation Director  
Community Development Department  
City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, Third Floor  
Sacramento, California 95811  
email: [sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:sdecourcy@cityofsacramento.org)

Dear Sean,

I am writing to strongly support the historic preservation of the Land Park Bowl building at 5850 Freeport Blvd. Land Park Bowl made Freeport Boulevard a family entertainment destination located in Sacramento's south area. It became a popular community family magnet and gathering place and is a significant location for Sacramento's Japanese-American communities.

Built in 1960, at the pinnacle of America's popularity with bowling, the bowling alley was a cornerstone of the post WWII Mid-Century Modern architectural development boom during the early days of Sacramento's interstate freeway planning and development. The building design is not only historically and architecturally significant, it is a unique landmark in South Sacramento. The Land Park Bowl building is the very last bowling alley in the City of Sacramento, and should be preserved.

There is no question that the building is architecturally, culturally, and historically significant, meets CEQA requirements, and must be preserved!

Sincerely,

John Yoshikawa  
8645 Glenroy Way  
Sacramento, CA 95826



# PRESERVATION **SACRAMENTO**

PO Box 162140, Sacramento CA 95816 – [preservation.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:preservation.sacramento@gmail.com) - [PreservationSacramento.org](http://PreservationSacramento.org)

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May 21, 2025

To: Sean deCourcy, Preservation Director, City of Sacramento  
300 Richards Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento CA 95811

**Re: Support for Listing of 5850 Freeport Boulevard on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (M24-014)**

Director deCourcy,

The Board of Directors of Preservation Sacramento wishes to express our support for listing 5850 Freeport Boulevard, also known as Land Park Lanes, in the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources. The property meets Sacramento Register Criterion I for its association with Sacramento AAPI history, due to its development by Japanese-American developer Gonzo Sakai, and its hosting of Sacramento's Nisei bowling leagues. It is also eligible for its association with LGBTQ+ history for its hosting of LGBTQ+ bowling leagues, including the River City Bowlers.

William Burg

President, Preservation Sacramento Board of Directors

Dear Sean,

I truly appreciate the historical significance of Land Park Bowl has had on the community in the past, but I would like to express support to NOT preserve the building as historical. I believe that would restrict the ability for the building to serve as a community staple for the present and future and it should be free to turn into whatever the community desires.

Bowling alleys have closed all over because it's an activity that's losing popularity and interest. There are many other activities that are growing and gaining interest and participation that could be better options to get members of the communities out of their houses and being active and meeting others. By designating it as a historical property, it would be handcuffed in the potential possibilities that could take place there.

In addition, making it a historical property would likely require the city to financially support it and at a time when the city is facing a massive budget deficit, it doesn't seem financially prudent.

Thank you for your consideration and reading my thoughts.

Sincerely,

Michael King

Hollywood Park resident