

ORDINANCE 2025-0018

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

July 22, 2025

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 May 21, 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:
 - 1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

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Exhibit A – Significant Features and Characteristics

Adopted by the City of Sacramento City Council on July 22, 2025, by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Dickinson, Jennings, Kaplan, Maple, Talamantes, and Vang

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Members Guerra, Pluckebaum, and Mayor McCarty

Attest:  08/13/2025

Mindy Cuppy, City Clerk

The presence of an electronic signature certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy as approved by the Sacramento City Council.

Passed for Publication: June 24, 2025

Published: June 27, 2025

Effective: August 21, 2025

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).**