

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

DRAFT

Historic name: St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District
 Other names/site number: De Paul Evangelization Center
 Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 1105 S. Bluff Road and 420 Date Street
 City or town: Montebello State: California County: Los Angeles
 Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: church school

RELIGION: church-related residence

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL: civic

RELIGION: religious facility

RELIGION: church-related residence

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Mid-Century Modern

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: brick, stucco, wood, steel, and glass

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District was historically known as St. Vincent's Seminary and later known as the De Paul Evangelization Center. Located at 1105 S. Bluff Road with an additional address at 420 Date Street in Montebello, the district occupies an irregularly shaped 12.3-acre parcel bordered by Frankel Street to the north, Date Street to the south, S. Bluff Road to the east, and Carob Way to the west. The parcel is surrounded by mostly single-family residences to the north, south, and west, and to the east overlooks the Rio Hondo. Seventeen contributing resources include eleven buildings, one site, two structures, and three objects. Two post-period of significance noncontributors include one structure and one object. The buildings, structures, and objects are set within lushly landscaped grounds, with mature magnolia, pine, ficus, oak, and palm trees. The landscape and associated features are identified as the contributing site. The district retains all aspects of historic integrity.

Narrative Description

The master plan by Barker & Ott places the classroom building and Chapel at the heart of a pinwheel plan with administrative, residential, and recreational sectors of the plan extending in

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the four cardinal directions. The notable exception to the residential sector is the Sisters' Residence, placed in the administrative zone to separate the women and men's residences. Circulation pathways connecting the various zones consist of covered and uncovered walkways. The buildings and pathways create three courtyard gardens. At the perimeter of the parcel, the former sports fields are overgrown with wild grasses.

The property is relatively flat and is enclosed by a perimeter chain-link fence overgrown with hedges, vines, and trees. The primary entrance is the vehicular entry and parking area located on the eastern side of the parcel accessed via S. Bluff Road. It consists of a concrete driveway and an ovoid asphalt parking lot with a large brick monument sign reading "De Paul Evangelization Center Entrance and Parking on Date Street." This entry provides direct access to the Chapel and the Administrative Building. The secondary vehicular entrance is located via the driveway and parking lot at the southern end of the parcel accessed from Date Street. An automobile gate is set within a brick pier and long brick wall with a tile mural of the Virgin Mary and signage lettering reading "DE PAUL EVANGELIZATION CENTER." The gate opens to a large asphalt parking lot with brick monument sign reading "WELCOME Visitor Parking."

District resources are situated amidst a lush landscape designed by architects Barker & Ott. The landscape evolved organically at the hands of Brother Bernard, the school's librarian, who grew specimen plants in a lath house (no longer extant) on the property. All of the buildings were constructed between 1954 and 1969. Buildings are connected by covered walkways and paved, uncovered walkways, and are accompanied by patios, courtyards, and outdoor seating areas. The location of each resource is keyed to the Sketch Map/Photo Key (**Figure 3**) and Contributor/Noncontributor Map (**Figure 4**). A series of maps from the St. Vincent's Seminary Brochure (c. 1969) illustrates campus development (**Figure 5**).

Landscape/Setting

A fully integrated landscape creates a distinct sense of place for the gardens and grounds of the St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District. The seminary's buildings, structures, and objects are connected by covered walkways, landscaped pathways, intimate garden patios, courtyards, and surrounded by open grassy areas with mature trees along the perimeter fence and in the northeastern section of the parcel.

The exterior spaces are defined by formal and informal plantings, ornamental shrubs, shade trees, and outdoor furniture. These features include:

- Brick planters
- Brick and concrete walkways and patios
- Courtyards including mature trees and shrubbery, and ornamental plantings
- Statues of religious figures
- Wooden and metal benches

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The parcel features a number of large California live oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*). These native trees date back to the days of the Pansini Ranch. A stand of mature pine trees is located at the southern perimeter of the parcel, adjacent to the parking lot. A line of mature ficus trees are directly adjacent to the west elevation of the Recreation, Shower and Locker Room Building to shade the building from the afternoon sun.

The following descriptions were developed after a limited tour of the grounds and facilities. The Administration Building, Sisters' Residence, Maintenance Building, and the Recreation, Shower and Locker Room Building and Pool were not open or accessible for the tour, and therefore, may lack the description detail that was observable for other parts of the campus tour. No architectural plans are available for any of the buildings in the district

Descriptions of contributors and noncontributors are presented in chronological order with the colloquial name of the building (as shown on campus maps and signage) in parenthesis. The site is presented first, followed by buildings, structures, and objects as distinct groups.

SITE

1. Campus Plan and Landscape (site) Contributor c. 1954-1969
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *The Tidings*,¹ July 18, 1958 **Photos 1, 2, 3**

The campus plan is a pinwheel in design, located at the center of the parcel and accessible from Bluff Road and Date Street. The plan divides the campus into educational, residential, administrative, and recreational zones. All of the major buildings in the St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District can be accessed via a series of covered walkways supported by concrete columns or brick pillars, creating cloisters adjacent to each of the three courtyards. The first courtyard, where the shrine honoring the Pansini Family is, is directly accessible via the west side door of the Chapel. Another courtyard, between the Chapel and the classroom, and Dormitory #2, includes a small rose garden, and a third courtyard west of the Library-Study Hall, contains the Statue of Our Lady of La Vang. The Administration Building has two private courtyards. Almost every one of the campus buildings opens onto one or more landscaped courtyards, fully integrating the buildings with the landscape. The northeastern portion of the parcel is home to more than a dozen mature trees.

BUILDINGS

2. Classroom Building (Building A) Contributor 1954-55
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1954

The one-story, rectangular, gable-roofed, reinforced brick, Mid-Century Modern style classroom building is rectangular in plan. Courses of red brick are laid in a running bond. There are two entrances at the east and west elevations composed of two double doors with fixed-paned

¹ *The Tidings* is the newspaper published by the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Catholic Church.

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windows. Fenestration consists of large multi-paned steel windows. This is one of the first buildings constructed on the campus in 1954. The Classroom Building is connected to other nearby buildings by a series of covered walkways with integrated and freestanding colonnades held up by round, abstracted columns with abstracted capitals, or square brick columns.

3. Dormitory #1 (Building G) Contributor 1954-55
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1954 **Photo 4**

Dormitory #1 is a rectangular, one-story brick building with a side-gabled roof. Courses of horizontally raked red brick in running bond extend from the ground to the underside of the windows with an angled header course. Additional red brick courses extend to the top of the windows. The recessed entry on the east facade consists of a single wooden door with a single fixed pane of glass. Red raked-brick planters flank the recessed entrance. Fenestration consists of pairs of multi-paned steel casement windows, single, and groupings of three multi-paned steel casement windows. Security bars are located on some, not all, of the windows.

4. Gymnasium (Building E) Contributor 1954-55
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1954 **Photos 5, 6**

The two and a half-story, rectangular-shaped, shallow gabled-roofed Mid-Century Modern style Gymnasium building was constructed in 1954-55. The building appears to employ rigid beam clear span construction with red, horizontally raked, reinforced brick. The north/main facade features a symmetrical entrance with two sets of double doors beneath a gabled entryway with stucco cladding. The east and west elevations are composed of steel-reinforced brick with brick pilasters. A series of five two-by-four paneled metal windows (with two hopper windows per each series) located at the second floor level of the west elevation illuminate the space within. The center two windows may be operable casement windows, however, window hardware was not viewable during site visit. Pairs of steel casement windows are featured on the one-story volume of the west elevation.

5. Sisters' Residence (Building K) Contributor 1957
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *Los Angeles Times*, August 18, 1957

The Sisters' Residence is a one-story, L-shaped, side-gabled, reinforced brick Mid-Century Modern style building with steel casement windows, some metal replacement windows, and a wood and glass entrance door. The Sisters' Residence is clad in dark red brick laid in a running bond. The visible south elevation of this building also contains original and replacement fenestration with security bars.

6. Edward and Estelle Doheny Chapel (Building I) Contributor 1958
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *The Tidings*, July 18, 1958 **Photos 7, 8, 9, 10**

The Edward and Estelle Doheny Chapel consists of a large two-and-a-half story, Latin cross-shaped, front-gabled, Mid-Century Modern style sanctuary building with a four-and-a-half story

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freestanding, square-shaped campanile with open belfry constructed of reinforced concrete and clad in horizontally raked, dark red brick and cement plaster. The roof is clad in composition shingles. The west transept volume is slightly larger than the east transept volume. The Chapel was constructed in 1958.

An elongated cross and a concrete relief sculpture of the Virgin Mary decorate the east elevation of the bell tower. The symmetrical main entrance to the Chapel on the south elevation features a double-high gabled arch with gold cross tile detailing, and recessed, textured glass-paneled wooden doors below twelve stained glass windows. Six groups of three-by-three stained glass windows are visible on the east and west elevations of the sanctuary at the top of the upper volume, under the roof eaves.

The white terrazzo narthex floor features a large green and yellow terrazzo design of an SV logo. The Chapel interior has a simple, double-height white marble wainscoting on the interior perimeter walls and continuing through the apse, above which is white plaster. The Chapel's white terrazzo floor features a blue and green zigzag pattern along the main aisle. Twelve stained-glass windows of saints and pre-canonization saints at the roofline provide the color in the space beneath which twelve wooden plaques depict the stations of the cross. Six large Mid-Century Modern light fixtures are suspended from the ceiling. An elevated choir loft is located at the southern end of the Chapel along with a large stained-glass window of St. Vincent and a young boy, representing the seminary.

The east transept features the same double height marble wainscoting, a blue marble inset with a bas relief of the Virgin Mary, two small round stained glass windows on the north wall and two rectangular stained glass-windows on the south wall to the east of a tertiary entrance door. The west transept is the location of the sacristy and features several stained glass windows with icons representing many of Christ's miracles.

7. Administration Building (Building H) Contributor 1958
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *The Tidings*, July 18, 1958 **Photos 11, 12**

The one-story L-shaped, reinforced brick Administration Building (including the Dining Hall and Faculty Residence) was constructed in 1958. It has a side-gabled roof and an asymmetrical entrance of an aluminum and glass entry door with six fixed paned aluminum windows. Courses of dark red running bond brick extend from the ground to the underside of the fenestration, where an angled header course serves as a sill. Courses of horizontally raked dark red brick in running bond extend from the angled header course to the eave. Fenestration on the east elevation of the Administration Building consists of windows with security bars. The north elevation features sliding aluminum doors opening out on to the Pansini courtyard and covered walkway. The north elevation of the dining hall volume features groupings of three and four double-hung aluminum windows. At the south end of the building, a slump block concrete wall creates a patio space.

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The Administration Building's office volume is connected to the Dining Room volume on the west elevation by a large overhang supported by square brick pillars and to the Chapel by an arched concrete screen wall with punctuated circular openings, and an arched cloister. The green and white terrazzo floor of the entrance to the administration building features a large "SV" logo, representing St. Vincent's.

8. Dormitory #2 (Building D) Contributor 1958
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *The Tidings*, July 18, 1958 **Photo 13**

The two-story, rectangular, reinforced brick, gable-roofed Dormitory Building #2 was designed in the Mid-Century Modern style. A band of dark red brick in running bond extends from the ground to the bottom of the first floor fenestration where there is an angled header course. Courses of lighter horizontally raked red bricks extend from the bottom of the first floor windows to the roofline with another angled header course located under the second-floor windows. The building also has a series of small, square cast stone elements inlaid into the brick facades at the first and second floors of its long elevation. Fenestration includes multiple individual wooden windows at the first and second floor levels of its north and south elevations and security bars are present on all first-floor windows. Exterior metal staircases are located on the east and west elevations.

9. Library-Study Hall (Building B) Contributor 1961
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *The Tidings*, October 6, 1961

The Mid-Century Modern style, one-story, U-shaped reinforced-brick building has a side-gabled roof. Courses of dark red brick in running bond, extend from the ground to the underside of the windows with an angled header course of bricks as a sill. Above this, courses of lighter red, raked brick in running bond extend to the underside of the roof overhang. The east/main façade has a covered walkway and multiple wood and fixed-paned glass classroom entrance doors. A series of aluminum windows line the primary façade and secondary elevation.

10. Maintenance Building (Building J) Contributor 1961
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: *The Tidings*, October 6, 1961

The one-story, rectangular, brick-clad, side-gabled Maintenance Building was constructed in 1961. Roof cladding is of composition shingles and wall cladding consists of dark red, horizontally raked brick laid in a running bond. The building features three garage doors and a wooden entry door.

11. Dormitory #3 (Building C) Contributor 1962
Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: St. Vincent's Yearbook, 1979 **Photo 3, 14**

The two-story, rectangular, reinforced brick, gable-roofed Dormitory Building #3 was designed in the Mid-Century Modern style. A band of horizontally raked, dark red brick extends from the ground to the bottom of the windows on the first floor and courses of horizontally raked, lighter

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red brick are laid above. Fenestration includes rows of standardized two-over-five aluminum sash casement and fixed-paned windows at the ceiling height on the first and second floors with brick sills. Exterior metal staircases are located on the short elevations. Security bars are located on the exterior of all first-floor windows.

12. Recreation, Shower, and Locker Room (Building F) Contributor 1969
Building Architect: Barker & Ott; Source: St. Vincent's Yearbook, 1979 **Photo 15**

The one-story, U-shaped, gabled-roofed, reinforced brick, Mid-Century Modern style Recreation, Shower and Locker Room Building was built around the rectangular pool (see structures, below) on three sides. Courses of red brick in running bond form the walls. Multiple entrance doors are located on the U-shaped east elevation. Fenestration consists of aluminum sliding windows covered by security bars. A metal security gate encircles the drained pool.

STRUCTURES

13. Meditation Garden and Decorative Wall (structure) Contributor c. 1960²
Attributed to Father Bernard; Source: *The De Andrein*, March 1960³ **Photo 16**

At the northeast corner of the parcel is a meditation garden featuring a wall composed of decorative concrete blocks and standard concrete masonry units. To the south of the wall is a large wooden cross and a statue of the Virgin Mary on a stone-clad pedestal. Immediately to the south of the statue is a metal and wood prayer rail. Concrete pathways lead to the structure that is flanked by mature trees, shrubs, and small, boxed hedges.

14. Swimming Pool Contributor 1962
N/A; Source: *The De Andrein*, February 1962

A large, rectangular cement swimming pool is located west of Dormitory #1 and east of the Recreation, Shower and Locker Room Building. It is surrounded by a cement patio on all four sides. A metal security gate is located on the eastern side of the pool.

15. Handball Courts Noncontributor c. 1974
Architect: N/A, Unknown; Source: St. Vincent's Yearbook, 1974

The freestanding, two-story concrete block handball courts were constructed c. 1974 on the north end of the parcel. A pair of courts is connected back to back with another pair, for a total of four courts. A low-chain link fence sits at the top of the back walls of the connecting courts. The walls encircling the courts on three sides are stepped. The handball courts sit on a large concrete

² In the March 1960 issue of *The De Andrein*, it is reported that work on the "shrine of the Blessed Mother" is progressing. It is likely that this is a reference to the meditation garden.

³ *The De Andrein* was a monthly newsletter published in Perryville, Missouri by the Stephen Vincent Ryan Unit of the CSMC.

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pad with a large chain-link fence at the southeastern corner of the pad. No architect has been identified.

OBJECTS

16. Shrine [honoring the Pansini Family] Contributor c. 1955
Designer unknown. Source: N/A **Photo 17**

In the courtyard to the west of the Chapel and east of the classroom building (roughly where the Pansini House once stood), a large round brick planter contains a large mature Coast Live Oak tree (*Quercus agrifolia*) with a gabled wooden shrine, and a statue of Saint Vincent. A brass plaque commemorating Andrew and Mary Pansini (early Montebello ranchers and donors of the land for the seminary) reads “IN GRATITUDE TO ANDREW AND MARY PANSINI DONORS OF THEIR HOME THE RANCHO SAN ANTONIO FOR THE ST. VINCENT’S SEMINARY.”

17. Statue of St. Joseph (object) Contributor c. 1955
Artist unknown. Source: Historic photo at De Paul Evangelization Center **Photo 16**

A large stone statue of St. Joseph, a man wearing robes with his right arm raised and a staff in his left hand, stands in the grassy area at the entrance walk into the campus from the Date Street parking lot. The statue sits at the center of a round planting area with flowers at the base, surrounded by white rock triangles and red ground cover.

18. Statue of Our Lady of La Vang (object) Noncontributor c. 2019⁴
Artist unknown. Source: Association of the Miraculous Medal Website

The courtyard created by Buildings 1, 3, 4, and 9 contains a statue of Our Lady of La Vang. The statue sits on a low, classical concrete pedestal and is adjacent to a mature Canary Island Date Palm tree (*Phoenix canariensis*), and mature shrubs. A river stone landscape path leads to the statue from the west.

19. Statue of Virgin Mary (object) Contributor Unknown, within PoS
Designer unknown, Source: N/A **Photo 3**

At the northwest corner of the ovoid parking lot, the Edward and Estelle Doheny Chapel and the Administration Building are visually connected by an arced, concrete screen with circular openings, covered on the east by mature landscaping and a statue of the Virgin Mary. The concrete screen is exposed and visible on the west side. Historic photographs date this historic landscape feature to the design of Barker & Ott, without providing sufficient detail to date the placement of this statue at the entry beyond pre-1987.

⁴ The Association of the Miraculous Medal website shows a different statue in this location in May 2018 <https://www.amm.org/MarysShrine/maypro18monte.aspx> (accessed January 4, 2024).

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Character-defining features of the St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District include:

- Plan dividing the campus into educational, residential, administrative, and recreational zones with the Chapel and Classroom at the heart of the design
- Simple, horizontal massing of all campus buildings except the Chapel
- Vertical massing of the Chapel
- Simple geometric forms
- Reinforced red-brick construction
- Low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eaves and cantilevered canopies
- Wood shingle and composition shingle roofs
- Flush-mounted metal frame fixed windows and clerestory windows
- Landscaped courtyards/patios
- Covered walkways and porticos connecting buildings supported by concrete columns or brick pillars
- Religious statuary in courtyards and at entrances
- Concrete screen walls with circular openings
- Unadorned wall surfaces; little or no exterior decorative detailing
- Mature trees and shrubs

Alterations

Alterations to the district have been minimal over time. Historic building permits are unavailable from the City of Montebello, Building and Safety Division, as they have been sent offsite for digitization with no fixed timeline for return. Identification of alterations, therefore, is based on historic photos and a site visit conducted on December 21, 2023. The Administration Building, Sisters' Residence, Maintenance Building, and the Recreation, Shower and Locker Room Building and Pool were not open or accessible for the tour. Historic aerial photographs have also been used to identify alterations.

With regard to the campus plan, the location of the component buildings has not been substantially altered since its construction from 1954 to 1969. There have been no new intrusions on the Barker & Ott plan. The construction of freestanding cement block handball courts c. 1974 at the north end of the campus is far away from the main district buildings. Tennis courts, which were roughly in this same location, are no longer extant.

The creation of the secondary entrance on Date Street on the south end of the parcel resulted in the paving of a new parking lot on former athletic fields adjacent to the Recreation, Shower, and Locker Room Building, Dormitory #1, and Sisters' Residence. Based upon historic aerial photographs, the parking lot was constructed c. 1987 following the campus' conversion to the De Paul Evangelization Center in 1986. Other athletic fields at the perimeter of the campus have become overgrown due to lack of use.

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The eleven buildings have had a few observable minor alterations. It appears that on some buildings, the wooden shake roofs have been replaced with composition shingle roofs. The Sisters' Residence (Resource #5), Dormitory #1 (#3), and Library-Study Hall (#9) have had some, not all, of the original windows replaced with aluminum windows on the main/west façade and the south elevation. Security bars and in-window air-conditioning units have also been added to some windows. Security bars have been added to the windows of the Administration Building (#7), the Recreation, Shower, and Locker Room Building (#12), Dormitory #1 (#3), and to the first floor of Dormitory #2 (#8). The original single and double garage doors of the Maintenance Building (#10) have been replaced with roll-up garage doors.

Historic aerial photographs c. 1958 depict only a few trees from the Pansini era, including the large oak tree where the shrine (#16) stands, a large tree in the courtyard where the Statue of Our Lady of La Vang (#18) stands, and a mature tree in the northwest corner of the courtyard adjacent to the covered walkway for Dormitory (#8). Historic photos from April 1955, reflecting the Barker & Ott design, show original manicured teardrop-shaped shrubbery, extant in many locations.

Historic photos indicate that the statue of St. Joseph was originally positioned east of the perforated concrete wall near the Chapel entrance. A Facebook posting by Ignacio Lopez (a former Seminary student who aided with the transition to retreat center) indicates that by 1987, when the Whittier earthquake hit, the statue was on the platform west of the entrance to the Administration building. The earthquake toppled the statue, which broke into three pieces, and St. Joseph's head broke the west glass of the entry vestibule of the Administration Building.⁵ According to resident clergy, the statue was again moved to a position inside the patio of the Administration Building before it was relocated to its position adjacent to the rear parking lot.

The date of placement of the Virgin Mary statue in the position east of the perforated concrete screen previously occupied by the statue of St. Joseph is unknown, likely prior to 1987. A bas relief of the Virgin Mary was also added to the east façade of the campanile of the Chapel at an unknown date. Historic aerial photos also show that by 1988, a small parking lot off Date Street was added, then expanded sometime between 2000 and 2003.

Integrity

St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District, overall, retains a high degree of integrity and reflects its significance as a Mid-Century seminary. Two noncontributing resources do not distract from the character of the historic district. Despite some deferred maintenance issues, the property retains all aspects of historic integrity, sufficient to convey its historic significance.

Location: The district remains in its original location and, therefore, retains integrity of location.

⁵ St. Vincent's High School Seminary, Montebello, CA Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10201695276938980&set=g.400495785491&locale=ms_MY (accessed January 3, 2024).

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Design: The property retains all of the original buildings constructed during the period of significance and has no additional buildings outside the period of significance. Although some plants and shrubs have changed, the property also retains all of the landscape features that historically comprised St. Vincent's Seminary. The buildings share a common architectural language including their Mid-Century horizontality, lack of ornament, and raked brick. The relationships between the district's components are substantially unchanged since the period of significance. Only the parking lot and Date Street entrance on the site of the former playing fields have been added. As a result, some visitors enter the campus from the parking lot, and the original statue of St. Vincent (previously located outside the perforated concrete screen wall, then just inside the administration courtyard), has been relocated and reoriented to the Date Street parking lot. Circulation within the campus remains intact. Per historic aerials, all of the hardscape is extant. Therefore, the property retains integrity of design for its buildings, campus plan, and landscape.

Setting: Historic aerial photographs from the 1950s and 1960s indicate that the area was undergoing a transformation to residential development while the seminary was under construction and expansion. These changes occurred within the period of significance. The property's relationship with the Rio Hondo is also unchanged. Therefore, the property retains integrity of setting.

Materials and Workmanship: The buildings retain most or all of their original materials including raked red brick, stucco, wood and steel windows, and original entrance doors. Only three buildings have some window replacements, and the original window openings have not been altered. The surrounding landscape continues to reflect both the choices of Barker & Ott and its evolution under Brother Bernard, which occurred during the period of significance. Mature trees, shrubs, and plantings far outnumber some small replacements of plants with more drought tolerant species in later years. With no building additions to the original Barker & Ott campus plan, the pathways, walkways, and circulation of the original plan are intact. Therefore, the property retains integrity of materials and workmanship.

Feeling: The district retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship. These all contribute to the district's authenticity as a rare and intact example of a postwar seminary for young men who were called to serve in the Catholic Church for a growing and expanding parish system. The property continues to convey its serenity, modesty, and reverence for God. The property, therefore, retains integrity of feeling.

Association: The district retains the original cohesive, purpose-built buildings in a contemplative and lushly landscaped campus setting necessary to housing and educating young boys in preparation for the ministry and housing the fathers and sisters dedicated to their preparation. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling necessary to convey the property's important associations as a postwar minor seminary for boys in Southern California. It therefore retains integrity of association.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1954-1969

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Barker, William L.

Ott, G. Lawrence

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the areas of Religion and Education as a significant example of postwar development by the Catholic Church. This seminary was part of, and key to, the Postwar Architectural Program of the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Catholic Church in concert with Southern California's postwar suburban development. The establishment of a minor seminary in Montebello was essential to the Archdiocese's plans to build and staff suburban churches throughout the region. More broadly, St Vincent's Seminary Historic District was emblematic of the growth of interest in religion across American post-World War II. The property is also eligible for listing at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a rare and intact example of a Mid-Century Modern style seminary campus by architects Barker & Ott, a firm on the approved list of architects of the Los Angeles Archdiocese. It is also a rare and intact example of campus planning by Barker & Ott with intact campus plan and a cohesive architectural language. The period of significance begins in 1954 when the seminary opened, continues through 1968 when the decision to accept day students at St. Vincent's signaled the decline in traditional seminary enrollment, and closes in 1969 when the last building designed by Barker & Ott was constructed. The district meets Criteria Consideration A as a religious property that derives its significance from its association with the broad pattern of Southern California postwar suburban residential development, the broad pattern of the post-World War II growth/importance of religion, and from its architecture and campus plan by Barker & Ott.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Religion and Education

The following narrative provides a brief history of Montebello Development; Postwar Institutional Development in Southern California; the Postwar Architectural Program of the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Catholic Church; Estelle Doheny; and St. Vincent's Seminary.

Montebello Development

Montebello is located approximately 15 miles southeast from downtown Los Angeles. The area known as the City of Montebello has a rich early California history. On September 7, 1771, Father Angel Somera and Pedro Cambon established the first San Gabriel Mission near the present-day intersection of San Gabriel Boulevard and the Rio Hondo. Around 1776, due to flooding of the Rio Hondo, the fathers moved the Mission to its location in San Gabriel. In addition to its role during the Mission Period, Montebello was also the site of the last armed conflict between the Americans and Mexico, the Battle of Rio San Gabriel for control of California, on January 8, 1847.

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Following the Civil War, an Italian named Alessandro Repetto (1823-1883) built a home here. Upon his death with no heirs, Repetto's brother sold the 1,200 acres to a syndicate of Los Angeles investors including Harris Newmark, Kaspar Cohn, John A. Bicknell, Stephen M. White, and Isaac Hellman who subdivided the town site of 40 acres in May 1889. First known as Newmark, the town was later renamed Montebello ("beautiful hills" in Italian) by William Mulholland, who helped supply the water. For years it was an agricultural community. Then oil was discovered in the hills. On October 16, 1920, Montebello was incorporated as a city.

During the post-World War II period, Montebello became a suburban community for the city of Los Angeles. Between 1940 and 1950, the population of Montebello rose 171 percent from 8,016 to 21,735 residents.⁶ Strong growth continued during the 1960s and 1970s and by 1980, the city had more than 50,000 residents.⁷ Montebello was one of the first Los Angeles suburbs to have a Mexican/Latino majority.

Postwar Institutional Development In Southern California

After World War II, Southern California experienced exponential growth as returning GIs and those that had passed through the region on their way to the Pacific Theater moved to the new developments of tract homes that dotted the Southland. Suburban-tract homes were constructed by the tens of thousands—enabled by wartime technologies and production methods. New freeways were developed to connect these suburbs with Los Angeles and other established cities. These new developments were everywhere including Westchester, the San Fernando Valley, Orange County, the San Gabriel Valley, the South Bay, and eastern Ventura. The agricultural land that had supported citrus and almond orchards was transformed by residential development. Homeownership and suburban development were further enabled by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and Veterans Administration (VA) loan programs available to returning service men offering low-cost loans and college tuition support.

Suburban Southern California gave rapid rise to the local institutions that supported these baby boom families. Of particular importance were schools and churches. Religious membership, church funding, institutional building, and traditional faith and practice all increased during the 1950s.⁸ This was true for all religious denominations including Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Catholics, and Jews.

New churches were built in the suburbs, often in the popular Mid-Century Modern style that reflected the optimism and prosperity of postwar Southern California. Along with these suburban churches came religious schools. These institutions needed clergy to support them—giving rise to the expansion of existing and a number of new seminaries and religious training centers.

⁶ U.S. Census, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, and 1980.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Joanne Beckman, "Religion in Post World War II America," Duke University Humanities Center, <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/trelww2.htm> (accessed May 27, 2023).

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These included Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, the Seminary of St. Thomas of the Apostle in Washington state, St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, and several others.

As author Gretchen Buggein describes, an important aspect of the new suburban church development was staffing them with young clergy "...just a few years out of seminary... as young and energetic as the congregation."⁹

The Archdiocese was right to target Los Angeles with a plan. By 1966, Los Angeles was the fourth largest and fastest growing See in the United States and surpassed every other diocese in population growth. The number of parishioners in Los Angeles increased from 625,000 in 1948 to 1,621,101 in 1966—159%. In contrast, Chicago grew 33%, New York grew 56% and Boston grew 46%.¹⁰

The Postwar Architectural Program of the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Catholic Church

After World War II, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles embarked on an ambitious building program. At the time, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles covered four counties: Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, and Santa Barbara. All of these counties experienced significant population growth during the postwar period. In 1976, the Diocese of Orange was formed reducing the footprint of the Los Angeles Archdiocese.¹¹

Scholar Michael Gibson suggests the activity was spawned by three factors: 1) the swift growth of the Catholic population in Southern California suburbs, 2) the desire of the Church's leadership to create parishes that would attract the next generation of America's Catholics (young, educated, middle-class and suburban) and 3) newly emerging theological and pastoral emphasis on congregational participation in worship with its implications for social activism and education.¹²

In 1948, there were 625,000 Catholics in the Los Angeles Archdiocese; by 1976, the number had grown to 2,208,989 in the four-county region. During the same period, the number of parishes increased from 221 to 319, high schools from thirty-four to sixty-four, and elementary schools from 125 to 267. The number of parishioners increased through in-migration and via record birthrates. In 1948, there were 42,926 students enrolled in Archdiocesan grade schools; by 1976, enrolment had more than doubled to 92,207. Similarly, in 1948, there were 9,084 students in Archdiocesan high schools; by 1976, the number had quadrupled to 36,323.¹³

⁹ Gretchen Buggein, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America* (e-book), (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), "Introduction."
https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Suburban_Church/pzB0DwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PT8&prints_ec=frontcover (accessed May 7, 2024).

¹⁰ "Los Angeles Fastest Growing See," *The Tidings*, July 1, 1966, 3.

¹¹ Michael Joseph Gibson, "Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs." MHP Thesis, University of Southern California, 2009, 10.

¹² Gibson, "Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs," 17.

¹³ Catholic Directories 1948 and 1976, as quoted by Gibson, "Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs." MHP Thesis, University of Southern California, 2009, 65.

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Catholics were also part of a larger phenomenon: a postwar revival of interest in religion. According to Gibson, “As the Cold War intensified and anxiety grew over the threats posed by communism, over population, poverty and a host of other ills, religion seemed to offer the inspiration many American’s needed to address these challenges.”¹⁴

The result of all this was a growing demand for religious infrastructure. The postwar building program of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles was the most ambitious in the country. In addition to churches, it included rectories, convents, seminaries, social halls, elementary schools, high schools, hospitals, and charitable institutions.

As Gibson describes, the process for constructing new buildings was a relatively streamlined one. The authority was concentrated in few individuals:

If the pastor of a parish believed that his congregation needed—and could afford to pay for—a new building, he contacted the Archbishop’s central administrative office—commonly known as the Chancery. If an administrative review determined that he request had merit, it was placed on the agenda of the Archbishop’s Board of Consultors—an advisory board consisting of assistant bishops and priests selected by the Archbishop. If the Archbishop and his Consultors decided to approve the request, they also considered and confirmed the pastor’s choice of an architect and established a preliminary budget for the project.¹⁵

Review and approvals for architectural design were similarly streamlined. The selection of an architect was the parish pastor’s responsibility, and the Archdiocese maintained a list of approved architects whose work had proven to be satisfactory. When a pastor selected a member of his parish or another local architect, the selections were generally approved by the Archdiocese after an investigation of the proposed architect’s credentials and qualifications.

Among the list of approved architects were firms that designed multiple projects for the Archdiocese. They included Albert C. Martin & Associates, Chaix & Johnson, Barker & Ott, and Verge & Clatsworthy.

The approval process for non-parish churches was even more streamlined, with the Archdiocesan Building Committee taking the lead. The postwar building program was led by Cardinal James Francis Aloysius McIntyre (1886-1979) who arrived in Los Angeles in 1948. He articulated that the greatest need was for Catholic schools because the Archdiocese had an obligation to help Catholic parents provide a Catholic education for their children. He served as Archbishop of Los Angeles from 1948 until 1970 and became a cardinal in 1953. Cardinal McIntyre was assisted in the building program by Cardinal Timothy Manning (1909-1989), who served on the Archdiocesan Building Committee while Assistant Bishop. Manning succeeded McIntyre as Archbishop of Los Angeles and served in that capacity from 1975 to 1985. The Los Angeles

¹⁴ Gibson, “Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs,” 23.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

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Archdiocese' ecclesiastical building program became a model for other areas of the Church across the United States.¹⁶

Estelle Doheny (1856-1958)

Carrie Estelle Betzold was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin in 1856. She was the second wife of Edward L. Doheny (1856-1935), an American oil tycoon known as the “Dean of Western Oil Producers” who drilled the first successful oil well in the Los Angeles City Oil Field in 1892.¹⁷ Estelle, as she was known, married Doheny on August 22nd, 1900, in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

During his lifetime, Edward Doheny was a philanthropist who supported the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Catholic Church. Doheny funded much of the construction of St. Vincent's Church and shared a strong friendship with John Cantwell, Bishop of Los Angeles.¹⁸ Estelle converted to Catholicism in 1918 and was a devout supporter in her own right. During the 1920s, Edward Doheny suffered through two scandals: an accusation of bribery of the Secretary of the Interior in the Teapot Dome scandal (for which he was acquitted) and the mysterious death of his only son, Edward “Ned” Doheny (1893-1929). In memory of this son, the disgraced oil tycoon funded the establishment of Doheny Memorial Library at the University of Southern California (USC). For the last several years of his life, Edward was unwell, and he and Estelle spent most of their time at their Los Angeles home at 9 Chester Place or at one of their several ranch properties.

Estelle was a philanthropist in her own right, with the principal beneficiary being the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Catholic Church. As described in the Vincentian newspaper, *The De Andrien*, “she devoted almost half of her 83 years to further the works of Christ, the works of the Church.”¹⁹ In 1931, Estelle Doheny was named a Lady of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem by Pope Pius XI. On June 29, 1939, in recognition of her many charitable activities, Estelle Doheny was conferred the title of royal papal countess by Pope Pius XII—the first such bestowal in Southern California.²⁰

According to Monsignor Francis J. Weber, “The sons and daughters of St. Vincent were particularly dear to her.”²¹ She erected the Edward Laurence Doheny Memorial Library adjacent to the Archdiocesan Major Seminary in Camarillo in 1940. She was also close to Father William G. Ward, the pastor of St. Vincent's parish. Father Ward acted in an advisory capacity to Estelle and was instrumental in encouraging her donation of the Chapel and three buildings at St. Vincent's Seminary in Montebello. As a result, Estelle Doheny was known as the “first lady of

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Msgr. Francis J. Weber, *Southern California's First Family: The Dohenys of Los Angeles*, (Mission Hills, CA: The Archival Center, 1992), 2.

¹⁸ Ibid., 14.

¹⁹ “Community Benefactress, Dies,” *The De Andrien*, December 1958, 1.

²⁰ Weber, *Southern California's First Family*, 4, 21.

²¹ “Community Benefactress, Dies.”

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the seminaries.”²² She was present at the groundbreaking and blessing of St. Vincent’s Seminary for phase 1 and phase 2 of the construction activity.

Estelle also became a renowned collector of rare books and manuscripts. By 1937, her library was one of the foremost private libraries and the finest collection ever amassed by a woman.²³ Doheny donated this collection of 7,900 books to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Los Angeles.²⁴ The collection was later sold by the Catholic Church in a series of auctions for \$37 million.²⁵ She also founded the Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation in 1949 for the advancement of education medicine, religion, and science. Estelle Doheny suffered from glaucoma during the last seventeen years of her life, living as a functionally blind woman. She died on October 30, 1958.

St. Vincent’s Seminary

The establishment of seminaries in the Catholic Church dates back to July 1563 by the Council of Trent. Diocesan seminaries in the United States were modeled on those in France. American seminaries were founded by Sulpicians or Vincentians.²⁶ Historically, seminaries were an important part of the Catholic Reformation.²⁷ Because American seminaries were grounded in the European education system, they defied the American organizational principles of four years of high school, followed by college. They typically consisted of two divisions: the minor seminary, which embraced four years of high school and two years of college, and the major seminary, which inaugurated studies that were specifically ecclesiastical at the college level.²⁸ American seminaries were also usually constructed in rural areas, as isolated places of study.

The Vincentians were founded by St. Vincent De Paul in 1625. Vincentians in California date back to the third bishop of California, Thaddeus Amat, C.M. (1810-1878).²⁹ He established Old St. Vincent’s College (1865-1911) in 1865 in rented rooms of the Lugo House in the Los Angeles Plaza, then moved quarters to a more permanent location the following year.³⁰ He also erected St Vibiana’s Cathedral in Los Angeles.³¹ The Vincentians took up parish work in Los Angeles, Montebello, San Diego, and Whittier.

During the early 1950s, Andrew (1918-1958) and Mary Catherine Pansini (c. 1892-1975) donated their ranch home and fourteen acres of Rancho San Antonio to the Vincentian Fathers

²² Ibid., 5.

²³ Ibid., 64.

²⁴ Ibid., 65.

²⁵ Martin R. Ansell, *Oil Baron of the Southwest: Edward L. Doheny and the Development of the Petroleum Industry in California and Mexico*, (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University, 1998), 245.

²⁶ Stafford Poole, CM, *Seminary in Crisis*, (New York, NY: Herder and Herder, 1965), 37-38.

²⁷ Ibid., 41.

²⁸ Ibid., 50.

²⁹ C.M. after a priest’s name means that the priest belongs to the Congregation of the Mission, such as Vicentians or Lazarists.

³⁰ “Southland’s Vincentians Start Second Century,” *The Tidings*, August 27, 1965, 4.

³¹ “Vicentians Start Seminary Here, *The Tidings*, July 9, 1954, 3.

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for the location of the new St. Vincent's Seminary.³² Located on a bluff overlooking the Rio Hondo, the property included a house and barn roughly in the location of the present-day entrance and parking lot on South Bluff Road. The land donation was partially inspired by their son, Father Francis David Pansini (1916-2001), a priest in the Vincentian Community and former teacher of scripture at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo.³³

As described by Father William Kenneally, C.M., "...the most important institution in any diocese is its seminary."³⁴ As previously noted, seminaries include major and minor seminaries. A minor seminary is a boarding high school designed to prepare young boys for vocations in the priesthood and religious life. For many years, the only Vincentian minor seminary was located in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. A minor seminary also prepared boys for entrance into the major seminary, or college seminary—in this case, St. John's Major Seminary/St. John's Seminary College in Camarillo.³⁵

For St. Vincent's Seminary, the Archdiocese turned to one of its pre-approved architectural firms: Barker & Ott. In an early rendering of the campus published in *The Tidings*, the design of St. Vincent's Seminary is comprehensive with a Chapel evoking more Spanish Colonia Revival than the resulting Mid-Century Modern style church as constructed.

On July 8, 1954, ground was broken for the new St. Vincent's Seminary. It was officiated by James Francis Cardinal McIntyre (1886-1979). Estelle Doheny, who donated funds for the building of the first dormitory at St. Vincent's, attended the ground breaking.³⁶ The school opened in September 1954 with eight students. Classes were initially held in the Pansini home, until a classroom building was completed.³⁷ The faculty also lived in the former Pansini home. Until a dormitory could be built, students commuted, and out-of-town students were housed nearby with members of the Catholic community.³⁸ Additional grades were added every year until a full four-year program was achieved. By 1956, the school had thirty students.³⁹

Landscaping for the seminary was augmented by Brother Bernard, the school's librarian, with little influence from the architects Barker & Ott.⁴⁰ In 1957, Brother Bernard constructed a large "lath house" in which to grow young plants for future landscaping.⁴¹ Brother Bernard also laid

³² Andrew Pansini (1918-1958) was born in Mofetta, Italy and was president of Union Square Garage, Inc. in San Francisco and Savoy Auto Parks and Garages, Inc. in Los Angeles. Although Pansini was present at the ground-breaking for the new campus, he died before the second phase of the new school was opened in 1958.

³³ In his later years, Father Francis David Pansini served on the Board of the Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation.

³⁴ "St. Johns A Bequest to Future California," *The Tidings*, July 1, 1966, 1.

³⁵ With the opening of the College in 1965, the seminary system was regularized as high school, college, and graduate school.

³⁶ "Ground Broken for Seminary in Montebello," *Los Angeles Times*, July 9, 1954, 6.

³⁷ "Seminary Units Being Built at Montebello," *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1954, 16.

³⁸ "Provincial Expansion," *The De Andrien*, October 1954, 10.

³⁹ "Public, Church Schools Tell Enrollment Gains," *Los Angeles Times*, September 30, 1956, 10.

⁴⁰ "New Minor Seminary Well Under Way," *The De Andrien*, April 1955, 2.

⁴¹ "California," *The De Andrien*, Jan-Feb, 1957, 4.

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out the lawns and playing fields in 1955.⁴² Students provided the labor for small projects such as the shrine of the Blessed Mother.⁴³

During the late 1950s, St. Vincent's was growing rapidly so they embarked on the second phase building program. First, a residence for the Hermanas Josefinas, also known as the Josephine Sisters, was constructed in the southern part of the campus. It included ten rooms, a Chapel, assembly room, and dining room.⁴⁴ The Chapel was designed to seat 180 people.⁴⁵ In 1958, three more buildings funded by Estelle Doheny were constructed: the Edward and Estelle Doheny Chapel, the Administration Building, and a two-story dormitory (Dormitory #2). The Administration Building housed faculty residences, a kitchen, and a dining room. All of the buildings were designed by Barker and Ott. By 1958, St. Vincent's Seminary had 120 students.⁴⁶

The first rector was Father O. M. Sharpe (1911-2005), C.M.⁴⁷ Sharpe guided construction and developed the curriculum. In 1959, as Father Sharpe relocated to Phoenix, Arizona Father Thomas McIntyre became rector and continued in that role into the 1960s.

In 1955, graduates of Old St. Vincent's College (not extant) in Los Angeles donated an old Southern Pacific engine bell for use at St. Vincent's Seminary.⁴⁸

During the 1960s, the campus was expanded once again by Barker and Ott. In 1961, a new Library-Study Hall and a maintenance/service building were added to the campus. The Library-Study Hall contained a study hall, library, and typing room. In 1967, the two-story Dormitory #3 was added at the northeastern portion of the campus near Dormitory #2. The final addition was the Recreation, Shower, and Locker Room Building in 1969. This building contained a recreation room, hobby room, laundry, barber shop, dark room, music room, student store, an underclassman's lounge, and an upperclassman's lounge.⁴⁹

All of the campus buildings were in the Mid-Century Modern style using the language of horizontally raked red brick, gabled rooflines, and geometrically patterned concrete screen walls and connected by a series of covered colonnades and walkways. In addition to its buildings, the campus had a football field, softball field, tennis courts, volleyball courts, and handball courts.⁵⁰ The tennis courts (not extant) were located north of Dormitory #2 at the northern end of the parcel. A meditation garden, whose design is attributed to Brother Bernard, was added in the

⁴² "California," *The De Andrein*, November 1955, 6.

⁴³ "Montebello," *The De Andrein*, March 1960, 6.

⁴⁴ "New Facilities Being Built By Valley Seminary," *Los Angeles Times*, August 18, 1957, VIII.8.

⁴⁵ "Minor Seminary In Montebello Dedicated On July 19," *The De Andrein*, October 1958, 3.

⁴⁶ "Vincetian Seminary To Be Blessed," *The Tidings*, July 14, 1958, 3.

⁴⁷ "Seminary Units Being Built At Montebello," *Los Angeles Times*, October 17, 1954, I6.

⁴⁸ "Bell for St. Vincent's," *The Tidings*, May 27, 1955, 18.

⁴⁹ St. Vincent's Seminary. "Vincetian Fathers and Brothers College Preparatory Seminary Brochure." Montebello, CA, c. 1969, no page.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

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northeast corner of the parcel around 1960. By the early 1960s, St. Vincent's had "developed into one of the most complete minor seminary plants on the west coast."⁵¹

During the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, many Catholic priests and sisters left their vocations. Gibson attributes these defections to the desire to marry, resistance to authority, or dissatisfaction with a highly regulated lifestyle. When coupled with a decline in young people seeking to become priests, it had a devastating effect on the Church.⁵² In 1968, in an effort to encourage enrollment, St. Vincent's started welcoming day students.⁵³ Gibson recalled the 1950s as a period when every Catholic School eighth-grade class included one or two boys who went off to junior seminary.⁵⁴ The decline in young people seeking to become priests effectively ended the expansion of St. Vincent's Seminary.

In 1977, St. Vincent's Seminary established the "Provincial Archive." Father Joseph Falanga, Father William Read, and Father John Ruhl were the archivists. At this time, the northern half of Dormitory #1 was converted to steel shelving. One large room (approximately 30 feet by 40 feet) was partitioned into two rooms, each 30 feet by 20 feet.⁵⁵ The Document Room was used for the storage of written, printed, and audio visual materials. The Display Room contained display tables and cases. The archive was active through at least 1990.

Saint Vincent's ceased operations as a seminary in 1986 and the name was changed to the De Paul Evangelization Center.⁵⁶ In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the De Paul Evangelization Center closed as a functioning retreat center. Since then, part of the property houses a support services organization for women. Vincentian clergy also continue to reside on the property in the Administration Building.

Criterion C: Architecture

The following provides a brief overview of the works of architects, Barker & Ott; the USC School of Architecture; and the Mid-Century Modern style of architecture. The section closes with comparison between Barker & Ott works and Southern California Seminaries.

Barker & Ott

M. L. (Merl Lee) Barker (1888-1970) and G. Lawrence Ott, AIA (1895-1975) joined forces in architecture in Los Angeles in 1929. The firm ultimately became almost solely devoted to ecclesiastical architecture for the Catholic Church in Southern California.

⁵¹ "Statistics Tell A Story," *The De Andrein*, October 1961, 1.

⁵² Michael Joseph Gibson, "Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs," 50.

⁵³ "Seminary to Enroll Day Students," *The Tidings*, March 1, 1968, 9.

⁵⁴ Michael Joseph Gibson, "Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs," 245.

⁵⁵ Falanga, Joseph S., Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Province of the West, DePaul University, 183. <https://via.library.depaul.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1088&context=vhj> (accessed May 18, 2023).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

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M. L. Barker was born in Colorado and practiced architecture in Denver prior to moving to Los Angeles in the early 1920s. Initially, Barker & Ott built a practice on commercial and institutional commissions, particularly schools. Based upon renderings published in local newspapers during the early years of their partnership, Barker & Ott designed primarily in the Spanish Colonial Revival styles. Early projects included St. Boniface school (c. 1931), Church of St. Mary Magdalene (1931), an addition for the Queen of Angeles Hospital (1932-33), Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School (c. 1934), St Raphael Parish High School (1934), and Chapel for Mount Saint Mary's College (1940) all in Los Angeles. In 1939, Barker & Ott opened a San Diego Office.⁵⁷

G. Lawrence Ott graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a degree in architecture in 1921. He immediately returned to Los Angeles, where he obtained his first commission for the Los Angeles Archdiocese, a school building for the Church of the Holy Cross in Los Angeles. Ott's father was a general contractor who did work for the Church and that may have been a factor in the son's selection.⁵⁸

In 1949, William L. Barker (1924-1987), son of M. L. Barker, joined the firm. Born in Los Angeles, he received his B.Arch from USC in 1945. He was made a partner in the firm in 1956.⁵⁹ William L. Barker's influence can be seen in the firm's transition to Mid-Century Modern architecture (see USC School of Architecture, below) and may have been instrumental in the design transformation of St. Vincent's Seminary from its early Spanish Colonial Revival renderings into a Mid-Century Modern style campus.

Barker & Ott were hired by the Archdiocese to develop a master plan for St. Vincent's Seminary. A review of renderings and photographs from newspaper articles suggest that St. Vincent's is one of the earliest Mid-Century Modern designs by the firm. While the basic plan of the campus stayed true to the original vision, the style of the buildings evolved, with the Chapel reflecting a Mid-Century Modern aesthetic. A 1954 rendering of the master plan by the architects shows the early plan was executed with only a modification of the Chapel orientation.⁶⁰

A study of the development history reveals much about Barker & Ott's plan for St. Vincent's. The entrance to the campus was to be the site of the old house and barn off South Bluff Drive at the site of the focal point of the campus: the church. To the south, a series of administrative buildings were planned and to the north and west, the campus quad, classrooms, and dormitory buildings.

Because the campus could not be developed all at once, the Barker & Ott plan was developed in stages (Figure 5). The first three buildings (Dormitory #1, Gymnasium, and Classroom Building) were constructed at the center of the parcel. The addition of the Sisters' Residence at the far southern section of the parcel provided maximum special segregation for the men and women on

⁵⁷ "With the Architects," *Architect & Engineer*, August 1925, 117.

⁵⁸ "Historical Review of Holy Cross Parish," *The Tidings*, September 2, 1921, 3.

⁵⁹ *American Institute of Architects Directory*, 1962, (New York, NY: R. R. Bowker), 34.

⁶⁰ "New Minor Seminary Well Under Way," *The Tidings*, July 9, 1954, 3.

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the campus. With the placement of the four new buildings in 1958, Barker & Ott created a quad in the northern portion of the parcel. The addition of the 1961 Library/Study Hall inserted that building into the quad for maximum proximity to the classroom and reinforced the educational/instructional buildings as the heart of the campus. The addition of Dormitory #3 reinforced the residential zone in the northeastern part of the campus. All buildings were designed in the Mid-Century Modern style with a common architectural vocabulary of red brick, gabled rooflines, and connecting covered walkways. In 1969, Barker & Ott designed the Recreation, Shower and Locker Room Building that they placed adjacent to the athletic fields on the west side of the parcel.

Of Barker & Ott, Gibson writes, "...the very same firm that had made its mark on the cityscape with its widely dispersed eclectic revival classic sacramental churches...also designed the first truly successful communal church of the Archdiocese several years before the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council."⁶¹ That church, Our Lady of Grace (1962) in Encino, reflected the Church's gradual movement toward a more inclusive liturgy and more communal design for its nave. Gibson places Barker & Ott squarely at the forefront of a revolution in Mid-Century Modern Church design. The design of the Edward and Estelle Doheny Chapel at St. Vincent's Seminary preceded the liturgical changes that came with the Second Vatican Council.

From the 1940s through the 1960s, the firm designed more than seventy-five projects for the Los Angeles Archdiocese, the majority under the watchful eye of Cardinal McIntyre. While the firm designed dozens of churches, their niche appears to be school and campus commissions including parish schools, high schools, and college campus design. The seminary offered the architects a unique opportunity to showcase their talent for campus planning and excellence in sanctuary design.

The USC School of Architecture

The University of Southern California (USC) founded its architecture department in 1916. At the time, the pre-eminent west coast architecture program was in Berkeley at the University of California as founded by architect/educator John Galen Howard. Howard's curriculum drew heavily from the Beaux Arts tradition of education in which students were assigned to copy classical orders and historical details and to design buildings with fancifully noble programs.

During the 1930s, Dean Arthur C. Weatherhead's USC program "...was shaped by the need to reject prescriptive ideas about style emphasized under the Beaux Arts system."⁶² Weatherhead was the first USC dean to develop a nascent modern, hands-on curriculum.

After World War II, Dean Arthur B. Gallion, who lead the school from 1945 to 1960, expanded the school's modern pedagogy, and focused students on the pressing issues of the day: planning, industrial design, and housing. Gallion also created a culture in which post-and-beam modernism

⁶¹ Michael Joseph Gibson, "Creating Sacred Spaces in the Suburbs," 244.

⁶² Debi Howell Ardila, "Writing Our Own Program: The USC Experiment in Modern Architectural Pedagogy, 1930-1960.," MHP Thesis, University of Southern California, December 2010, xi.

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was the preferred design aesthetic—training hundreds of students and releasing them into practices throughout California and the west. William L. Barker, son of the founder of Barker & Ott, attended the USC School of Architecture during the height of the modern pedagogy espoused by Gallion and brought this new aesthetic and design skills into his father's office.

Mid-Century Modern Architecture

Mid-Century Modern is a term used to describe the post-World War II iteration of the International Style in both residential and commercial design. The International Style was characterized by geometric forms, smooth wall surfaces, and an absence of exterior decoration. Mid-Century Modern represents the adaptation of these elements to the local climate and topography, as well as to the postwar need for efficiently built, moderately priced homes. In Southern California, this often meant the use of wood post-and-beam construction. Mid-Century Modernism is often characterized by a clear expression of structure and materials, large expanses of glass, and open interior plans.

The roots of the style can be traced to early Modernists like Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler, whose local work inspired “second generation” Modern architects like Gregory Ain, Craig Ellwood, Harwell Hamilton Harris, Pierre Koenig, Raphael Soriano and many more. These postwar architects developed an indigenous Modernism that was born from the International Style but matured into a fundamentally regional style, fostered in part by Arts and Architecture magazine's pivotal Case Study Program (1945-1966). The style gained popularity because its use of standardized, prefabricated materials permitted quick and economical construction. It became the predominant architectural style in the postwar years and is represented in almost every property type, from single-family residences to commercial buildings to gas stations.

Character-defining features include:

- One or two-story configuration
- Horizontal massing (for small scale buildings)
- Simple geometric forms
- Exposed post-and-beam construction in wood or steel
- Flat roof or low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eave and cantilevered canopies
- Unadorned wall surfaces
- Wood, plaster, brick or stone used as exterior wall panels or accent materials
- Flush-mounted metal frame fixed windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows
- Exterior staircases, decks, patios and balconies
- Little or no exterior decorative detailing
- Expressionistic/Organic subtype: sculptural forms and geometric shapes, including butterfly, A-frame, folded plate or barrel vault roofs

Comparison of Barker & Ott Works, Southern California Seminaries

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Barker & Ott were prolific architects who worked almost exclusively for the Catholic Church. Through culling and analyzing newspaper articles mentioning their work including the *Los Angeles Times* and the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Tidings*, they built more than 120 projects for the church between 1951 and 1969, although we know they also designed projects for the Church prior to World War II.⁶³ Those projects included churches and school buildings.

Of all the projects reviewed, Barker & Ott appears to have master planned seven campus projects, including seminaries, high schools, universities and a youth home.⁶⁴ They include St. Bernard's High School (1957, 9100 Fallmouth Avenue, Playa Del Rey, extant); Rancho San Antonio/Boys Haven (1958, 21000 Plummer Street, Chatsworth, extant); Louisville High School (1960, 22300 Mullholland Drive, Woodland Hills, extant); Chaminade Preparatory School (c. 1961, 7500 Chaminade Avenue, West Hills, extant); Vincentian Novitiate/St. Mary's Seminary (1964 Las Canoas Road, Santa Barbara, extant); Mount Saint Mary's West Los Angeles Campus (c. 1963, 12001 Chalon Road, Los Angeles, extant) and the Villa Cabrini Academy (c. 1966, Woodbury University Campus, Burbank, extant).

All of these projects are private campuses with no, or limited, public access. Historic aerial photographs, building permits, newspaper photographs, and social media accounts have been used to provide additional information. Of the seven properties, the plans of five (Chaminade Preparatory, Louisville High School, Rancho San Antonio/Boys Haven, Villa Cabrini Academy, and Mount Saint Mary's West Los Angeles) have been substantially altered with the addition of new buildings altering the relationships among the campus components and no longer reflecting the design of Barker & Ott. The Vincentian Novitiate/St. Mary's Seminary appears substantially unaltered in a video from 2021, before the campus was purchased in 2022 by a developer.⁶⁵ From historic aerials, contemporary aerials, and social media posts from 2023, St. Bernard's High School's plan remains largely intact, and many buildings retain their original design and fenestration. The campus continues to function as a Catholic high school.

The other significant Catholic seminary in the region was St. John's Seminary (5012 Seminary Road, Camarillo, extant), the major (graduate) seminary for college and postgraduate level study. Construction on this facility began in January 1938, with substantial additions in the decades to follow. The original building was designed in the popular Spanish Colonial Revival Style. In 1940, the Edward L. Doheny Memorial Library by Wallace Neff, was dedicated. During the 1960s, the Mid-Century Modern-style St. John's Seminary College was constructed on the grounds.

The closure of junior seminaries not only affected Southern California, it was a national trend. A 2010 article by Fr. Daniel Vitz in *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* indicates that the number of

⁶³ No archive for Barker & Ott, or for William L. Barker or G. Lawrence Ott individually has been located.

⁶⁴ Master plans for each of these projects appeared in historic newspapers.

⁶⁵ Erik Torkells, "Who Bought the Former St. Mary's Seminary and Why," <https://www.sitelinesb.com/who-bought-the-former-st-marys-seminary-and-why/#:~:text=The%20buyer%20is%20Christus%20Victor,%2C%20Calif.%2C%20outside%20Sacramento.> (accessed December 29, 2023).

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junior seminaries in the United States declined from 120 in 1967 to only seven in 2010. Enrolled students fell from 16,000 to fewer than 600 in the same time period.⁶⁶ There are no other minor seminaries still operating in California.⁶⁷

Conclusion

St. Vincent's Seminary History District is a rare and intact example of a Mid-Century campus plan by Barker & Ott, architects for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, reflecting the postwar expansion of the Catholic Church and other religious institutions in suburban Southern California.

⁶⁶ Fr. Daniel Vitz in *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, as quoted in K. E. Colombini's article "The Last of the Junior Seminaries," *The Crisis*, March 22, 2017 <https://crisismagazine.com/opinion/last-junior-seminarians> (accessed May 2, 2024.)

⁶⁷ www.seminariesandbiblecolleges.com (accessed December 29, 2023).

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

___ previously listed in the National Register

___ previously determined eligible by the National Register

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designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: Online newspapers

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 12.3 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 33.991179 | Longitude: -118.115900 |
| 2. Latitude: 33.990164 | Longitude: -118.113430 |
| 3. Latitude: 33.988347 | Longitude: -118.115068 |
| 4. Latitude: 33.989148 | Longitude: -118.117117 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Per the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor's legal description,⁶⁸

EL CARMEL TRACT LOT BD ON NE BY FRANKEL AVE SE BY BLUFF RD, SW
BY DATE ST AND NW BY CAROB WAY PART OF LOT 96

Also known as Assessor's Identification Number (AIN) #6352-001-055.

⁶⁸ Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Website Property Search. <https://assessor.lacounty.gov/homeowners/property-search> (accessed April 29, 2024).

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the legal boundary that appears on the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor website.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Sian Winship, Independent Preservation Consultant
organization: _____
street & number: Box 308
city or town: Running Springs state: CA zip code: 92382
e-mail: sianwinship@gmail.com
telephone: (310) 560-6436
date: April 2024; Revised May 2024

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District
City or Vicinity: Montebello
County: Los Angeles
State: California
Photographer: Sian Winship
Date Photographed: December 21, 2023, unless otherwise noted

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 19 District overview looking northwest from Bluff Road and Date Street

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- 2 of 19 Courtyard adjacent to west elevation of Library-Study Hall, looking east
- 3 of 19 Courtyard and west elevation of Dormitory #3, looking northeast, Dormitory #2 visible at far left
- 4 of 19 East (main) façade of Dormitory #1, looking northwest
- 5 of 19 North (main) façade of Gymnasium, looking south
- 6 of 19 West façade of Gymnasium, looking east
- 7 of 19 Chapel and Administration Building looking west
- 8 of 19 Chapel, looking west, Dormitory #3 visible at far right
- 9 of 19 South (main) façade of Chapel, looking north
- 10 of 19 Chapel interior, looking north
- 11 of 19 East (main) façade of Administration Building with ovoid driveway, looking west
- 12 of 19 North elevation of Administration Building, looking south
- 13 of 19 North elevation of Dormitory #2, looking south
- 14 of 19 North elevation of Dormitory #3, looking south
- 15 of 19 South elevation of Dormitory #1 with south elevation of Recreation, Shower, and Locker Room Building at left; Date Street parking lot in foreground, and statue of St. Vincent at center right
- 16 of 19 Meditation Garden at northeast section of parcel, looking north
- 17 of 19 Courtyard with shrine to Pansini family, looking north; covered walkways lead from Classroom building at left to Library/Study Hall Building and Chapel at far right
- 18 of 19 Covered walkway with columns flanking walkway, looking east
- 19 of 19 Covered walkway with decorative concrete screen, looking east

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Figure 1 Location Map

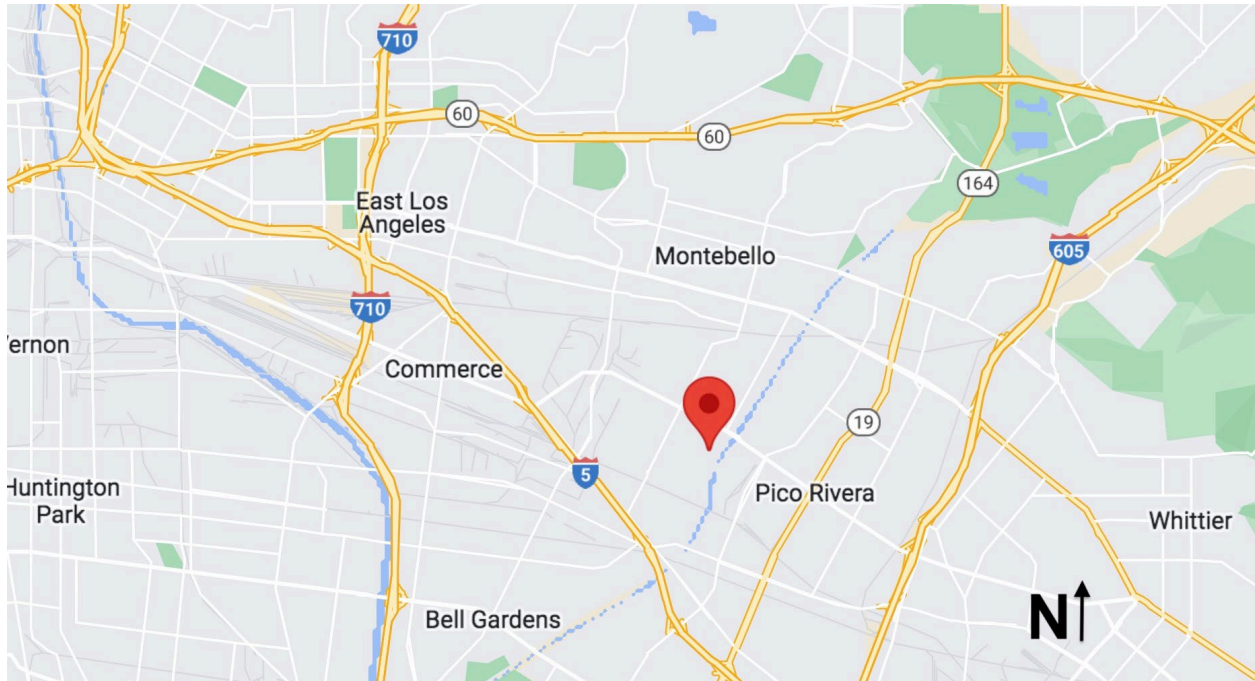
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3. Latitude 33.988347, Longitude -118.115068 (S)
4. Latitude 33.989148, Longitude -118.117117 (W)



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Figure 2 Vicinity Map

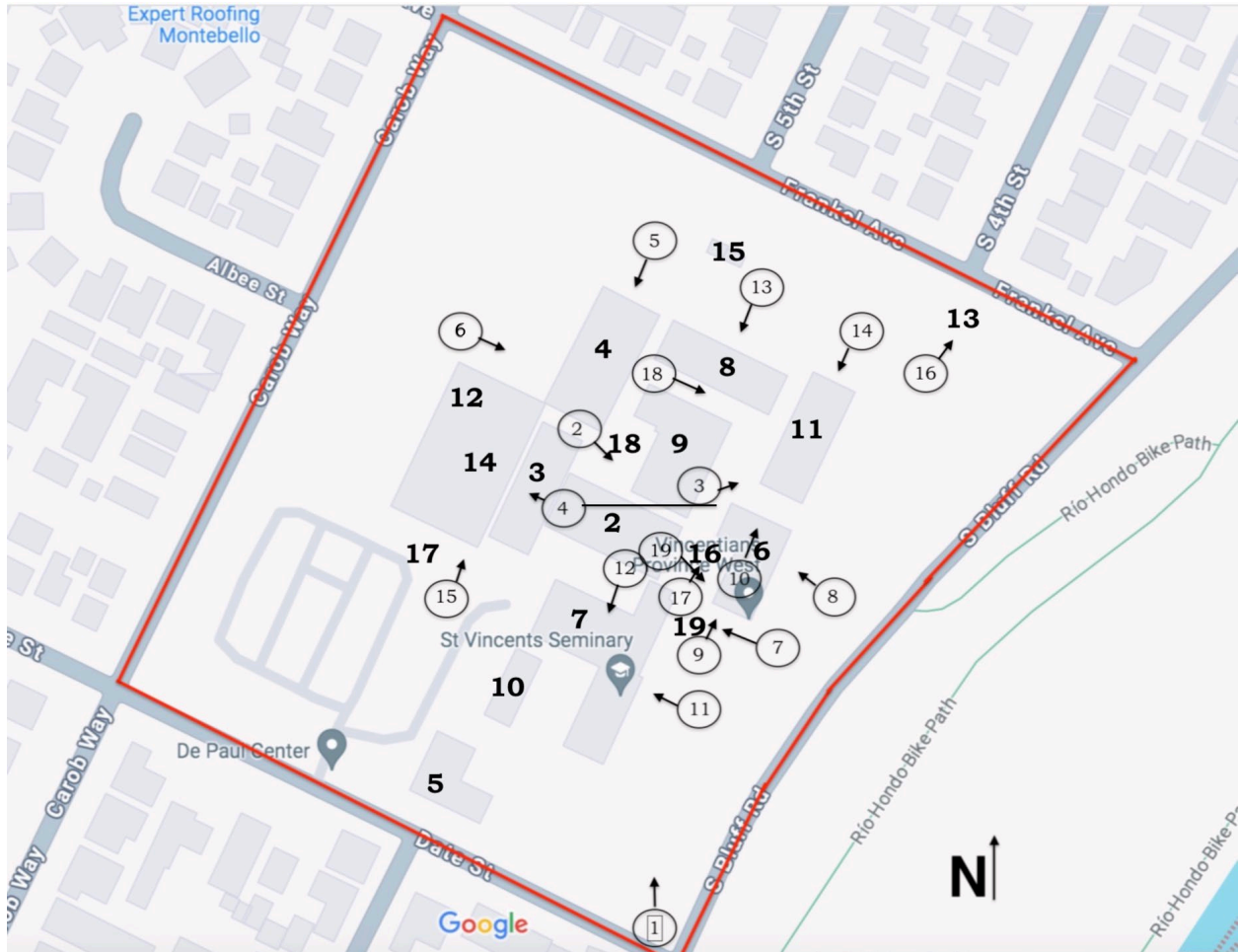


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Figure 3 Sketch Map/Photo Key

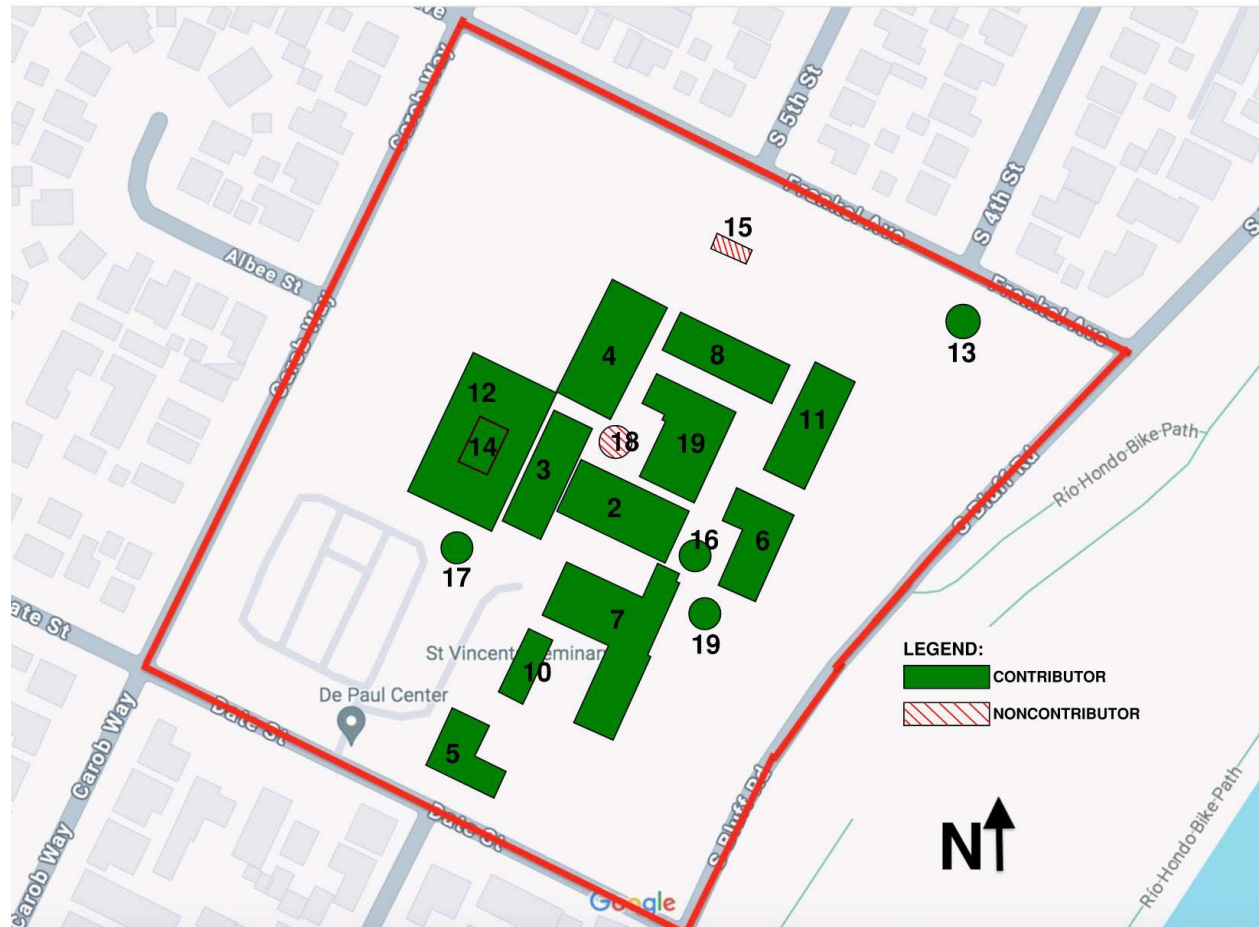
Bold numbers are resources; circled numbers with arrows are photos.



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Figure 4 Contributor/Noncontributor Map

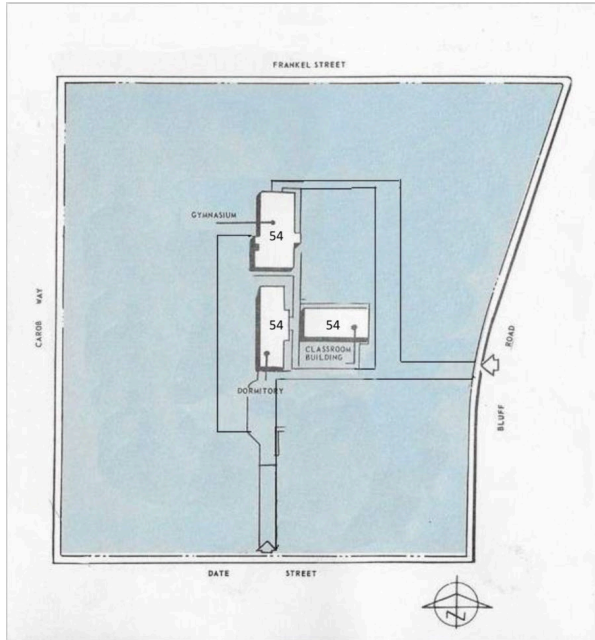


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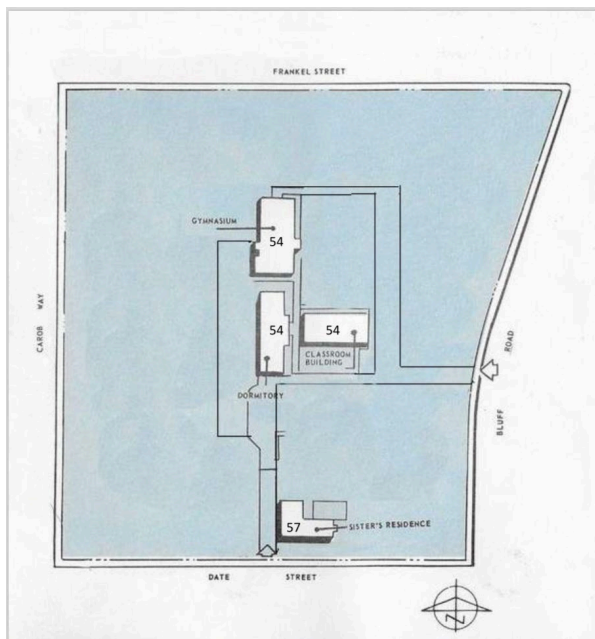
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Figure 5 Development History Maps, Source: St. Vincent's Seminary Brochure c. 1969 posted to Facebook; numbers on buildings indicate year built

St. Vincent's Seminary, 1954



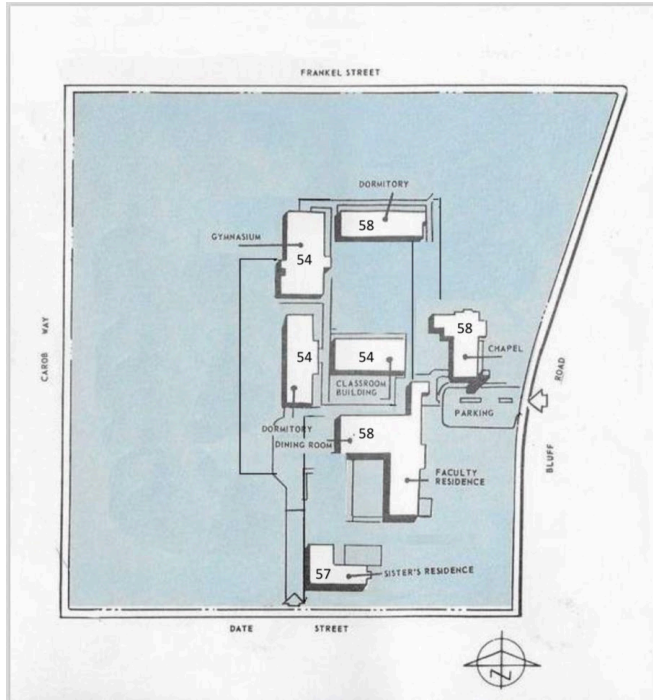
St. Vincent's Seminary Map, 1957



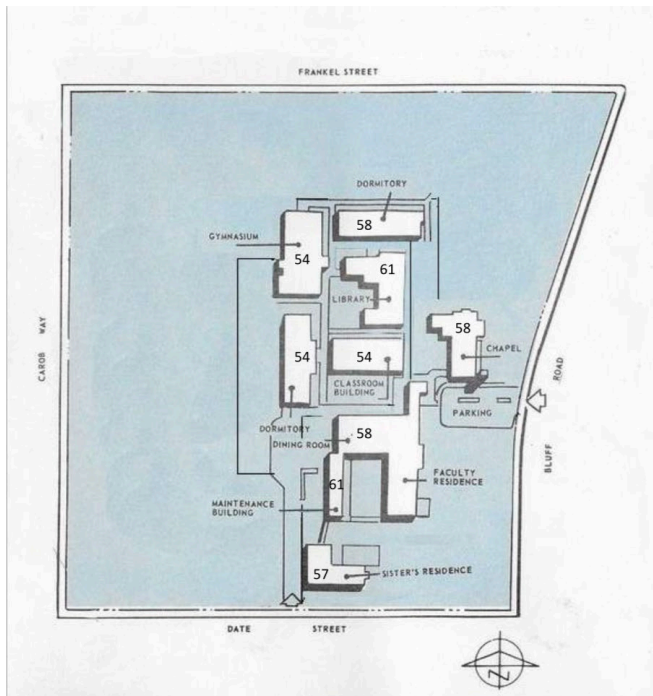
St. Vincent's Seminary Historic District
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St. Vincent's Seminary Map, 1958



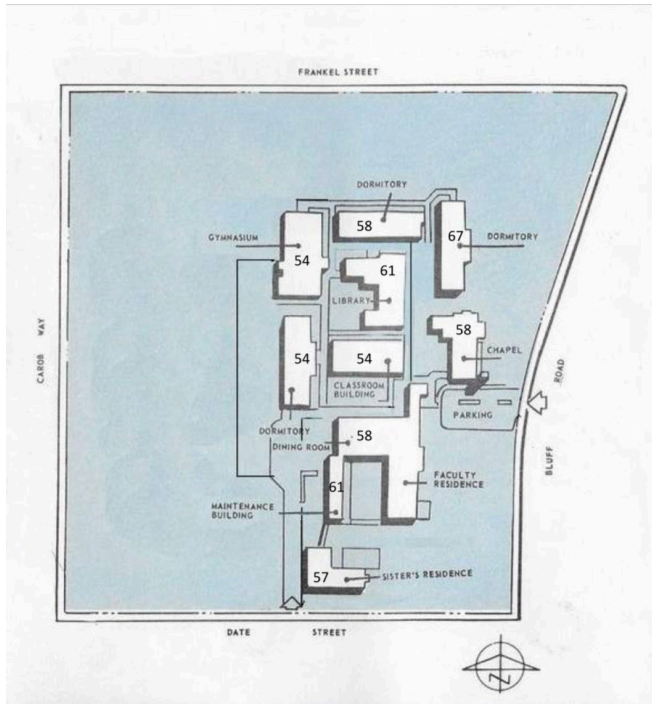
St. Vincent's Seminary Map, 1961



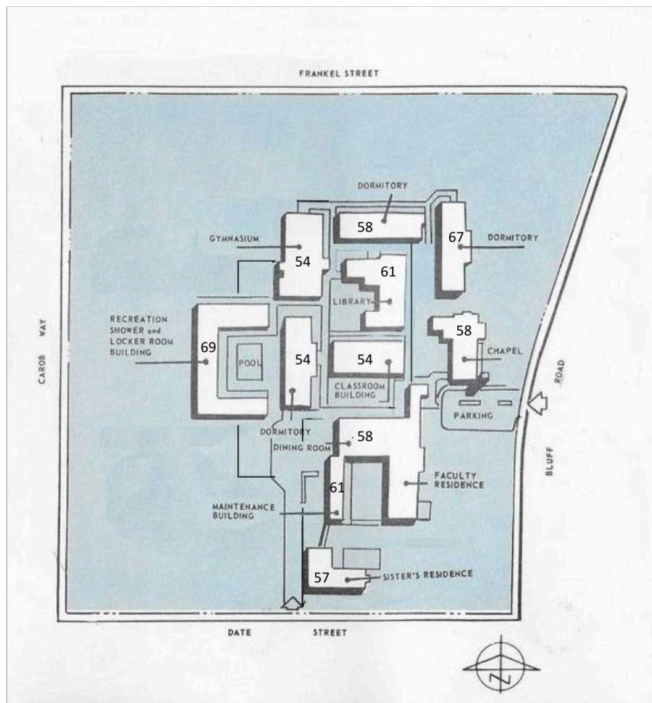
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St. Vincent's Seminary Map, 1967



St. Vincent's Seminary Map, 1969



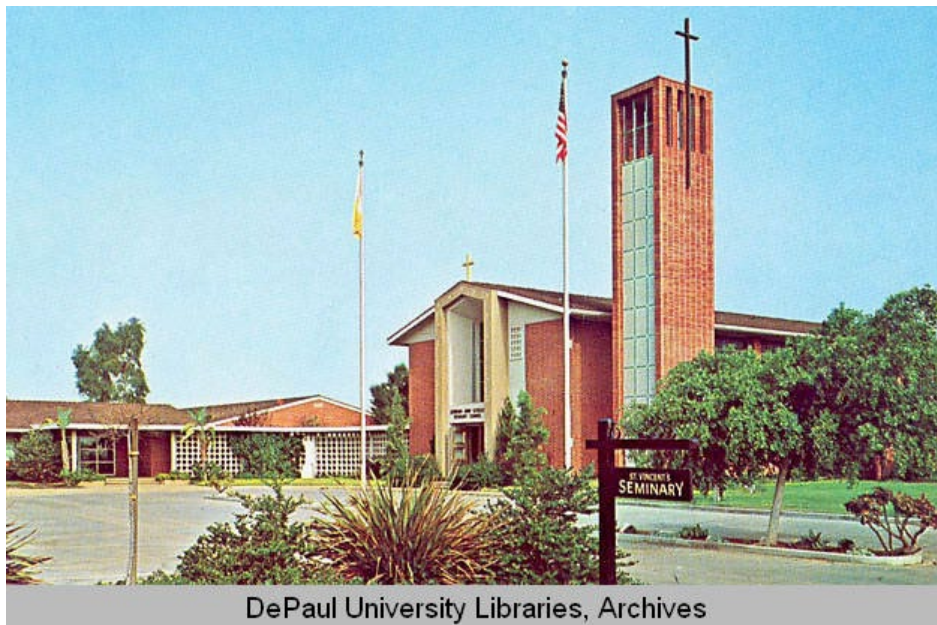
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Figure 6 Chapel at dedication July 19, 1958, James Francis Cardinal McIntyre at center;
Source: Herald Examiner Collection, USC Special Collections



Figure 7 Undated postcard, curved concrete wall visible to left of Chapel, entrance to Administration Building at far left; Source: DePaul University Archives [SUB 13]



DePaul University Libraries, Archives

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Photo 1 District overview looking northwest from Bluff Road and Date Street



Photo 2 Courtyard adjacent to west elevation of Library-Study Hall, looking east



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Photo 3 Courtyard and west elevation of Dormitory #3, looking northeast, Dormitory #2 visible at far left



Photo 4 East (main) façade of Dormitory #1, looking northwest



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Photo 5 North (main) façade of Gymnasium, looking south



Photo 6 West façade of Gymnasium, looking east



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Photo 7 Chapel and Administration Building looking west



Photo 8 Chapel, looking west, Dormitory #3 visible at far right



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Photo 9 South (main) façade of Chapel, looking north



Photo 10 Chapel interior, looking north



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Photo 11 East (main) façade of Administration Building with ovoid driveway, looking west



Photo 12 North elevation of Administration Building, looking south



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Photo 13 North elevation of Dormitory #2, looking south



Photo 14 North elevation of Dormitory #3, looking south



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Photo 15 South elevation of Dormitory #1; south elevation Recreation, Shower, and Locker Room Building left, Date Street parking lot foreground, St. Vincent statue center right



Photo 16 Meditation Garden at northeast section of parcel, looking north



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Photo 17 Courtyard with shrine to Pansini family, looking north; covered walkways lead from Classroom building at left to Library/Study Hall Building and Chapel at far right



Photo 18 Covered walkway with columns flanking walkway, looking east



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Photo 19 Covered walkway with decorative concrete screen, looking east



Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.