

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

Primary
 HRI #
 Trinomial
 NRHP Status Code

Other Listings
 Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 11

*Resource Name or #: 218 University Avenue

P1. Other Identifier: 200-298 University Avenue, Villa Verde Apartments

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County Yolo

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Date T ; R ; ¼ of ¼ of Sec ; B.M.

c. Address: 218 University Avenue City: Davis Zip: 95616

d. UTM: Zone , mE/ mN

e. Other Locational Data: APN 070-065-005

***P3a. Description:**

The subject property is located on the east side of University Avenue approximately midblock between 2nd and 3rd streets. The 0.296 acre lot include a U-shaped multi-family residential building consisting of townhome style units. The top of the "U" faces the alley to the east and the primary (west) façade fronts University Avenue. The roof is cross gabled with wide eaves and exposed rafters. The first floor is clad in stucco and the second floor is clad in board-and-batten vertical wood siding. The windows appear to be vinyl sash sliders. Concrete breezeway blocks are located on the west façade at the first floor roughly in the middle of the façade. The landscaping between the west façade and the public sidewalk includes one mature tree. A parking lot is located at the rear of the building and is accessible from the alley.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: HP3. Multiple family property

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



P5b. Description of Photo:
 West façade, ESA 2022

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:
 Historic Prehistoric Both
 c1963 / Architectural plans

*P7. Owner and Address:
 Chin Yumi & Chin Yumi & Trust
 44682 Garden Ct
 El Macero, CA, 95618

*P8. Recorded by:
 Vanessa Armenta, ESA
 2600 Capitol Avenue, Suite 200
 Sacramento, CA 95816

*P9. Date Recorded: June 2, 2022

*P10. Survey Type: intensive

*P11. Report Citation: none

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

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # 218 University Avenue
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*NRHP Status Code 6Z

- B1. Historic Name: Villa Verde Apartments
B2. Common Name: Villa Verde Apartments
B3. Original Use: multi-family residential
*B5. Architectural Style: Ranch-inspired
*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
Constructed c.1963. (Continued on page 6)

B4. Present Use: multi-family residential

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: n/a Original Location: n/a
*B8. Related Features: none

- B9a. Architect: unknown b. Builder: R&L Builders
*B10. Significance: Theme Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971) Area Downtown Davis
Period of Significance 1963 Property Type Multi-family residential Applicable Criteria n/a
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

In 2015, the *Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update* was prepared to provide a framework for the evaluation of 20th century resources within the City of Davis. It provided an updated historic context statement focusing on the World War II and post-war periods, evaluation criteria, and significant themes. The significance themes include Native American, Spanish, and Mexican Era (prehistory – 1847); Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904); University Farm and University of California Era (1905 – present); Early Twentieth Century and Depression Era (1905 – 1939); World War II and Post-War (1940 – 1958); Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971); and Progressive Visions, Managed Growth (1972 – 2015). The subject property was constructed in 1963; therefore, it falls into the Explosive Growth (1959 - 1971) significance theme established in the 2015 historic context.

(Continued on page 3)

- B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) none
*B12. References: (Continued on page 10)

B13. Remarks: none

- *B14. Evaluator: Amber Grady
*Date of Evaluation: September 7, 2022

(This space reserved for official comments.)



*P3a. Description: (Continued from page 1)



West façade, ESA 2022

*B10. Significance: (Continued from page 2)

Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971)¹

Decades of sustained growth of the University [of California], Davis' population, and its residential neighborhoods had begun to transform the town by the late 1950s. As noted above, the sleepy nineteenth-century farm town was being transformed into a more sophisticated "University City." By the late 1950s, local boosters were complaining that downtown was run-down and in need of redevelopment. Although some demolitions did occur, the biggest change Downtown was that the tiny commercial area began to engulf adjacent residential neighborhoods as it grew to accommodate Davis' expanding population. Commercial developments on Davis's periphery began towards the end of this era, with four grocery and retail developments constructed between 1966 and 1971.

In an echo of the 1945 efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, residents once again called for planned and managed growth at the end of the 1950s. The League of Women Voters released the results of a study in 1961 that recommended professional city planning, and adoption of a master plan and housing code to manage the growth already occurring. The study warned that a lack of planning could result in "potential slums," inappropriate division of houses into multiple units, and non-contiguous residential development that would threaten surrounding agricultural activity. The city released a revised General Plan later that same year. The Core Area Plan of 1961 expanded on the 1950s plans to redevelop the traditional neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown into a high density area, envisioning an urban transformation that included mega-block commercial development and high-rise apartment housing. The most highly urbanized concepts of the Core Area Plan never materialized, and planned growth during this period did not necessarily imply limiting development. A Davis Enterprise photographic essay from early 1966 illustrated the prevailing view of the

¹ Brunzell Historical, *Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update*, 2015, page 31.

period, arguing that what some termed “urban sprawl” was actually planned “perimeter growth.” The newspaper explained that Davis’ expansion outside its original boundaries on all sides was the result of a “carefully calculated policy ... to annex all perimeter land, in every direction,” and that the town’s “orderly growth” in all directions was a direct benefit of this policy.[...]

Residential Development

The continuing growth of the University intensified the population and residential expansion that had characterized the previous decade, and Davis grew rapidly in the 1960s. While the increased student population led to construction of apartments and duplexes, the growth of the academic and administrative staff was even more significant, as it brought new permanent residents to Davis. Fifty-six subdivisions were recorded between 1960 and 1969, many of which were double or triple the size of a typical subdivision from the immediate post-war period. The new neighborhoods required large tracts of land, and Davis began to grow beyond its original boundaries in all directions, crossing former de facto urban limits Highway 99 and Covell Boulevard. In 1969, Davis became the largest city in Yolo County. By 1970, it had 23,488 residents, and half of its workforce was employed in education. Population expansion led to growth in every aspect of local life, which was reflected in the city’s primary and secondary education systems. Nine new local schools were constructed between 1952 and 1968. City services and infrastructure often lagged behind during this period, however. In 1965, for example, Davis still had only one traffic signal, on B Street near the High School (since 1981 City Hall).

Despite Davis’ expansion in terms of housing, commercial activity, development of schools, and economic growth, the town took a hiatus from large annexations after the Chamber-led expansion in 1945. Additions to the size of the city were incremental and piecemeal in the 1950s. This did not slow development, and at least a dozen subdivisions were constructed outside city limits in the late 1950s. The pattern began to change after 1960, as developers continued to convert fields into subdivisions. Bruce Mace, a rancher with acreage east of Davis, broke ground on a new development at the end of 1959. El Macero Country Club and Golf Course was merely the initial stage of a large development that was to include hundreds of houses. Approximately three miles outside city limits, Davis leaders were afraid that it would become the nucleus of an adjacent competing city. Mace’s plans spurred the Davis city council to undertake the largest annexation in city history. In 1966, Davis annexed 1.6 square miles of new territory south of Interstate 80 in order to head off uncontrolled development adjacent to town.

After 1965, public investment in infrastructure and amenities finally began to catch up with local residential growth with installation of the first local traffic light. Central Park was renovated the same year, major sewer lines were installed in new subdivisions north and west of Downtown, and new police and fire departments were completed. In 1967, Davis opened its new Community Park and public pool and purchased the Municipal Golf Course. In 1969, Davis voters approved new sewer facilities.

“Cluster Planning”, which incorporated greenbelts into subdivisions, was an innovative form of development that began to take hold nationwide in the 1960s. It offered the environmental and quality-of-life benefits of increased open space, and allowed builders to avoid difficult terrain and save money by pouring less pavement. Cluster planning came to Davis in the mid-1960s. Like many development trends over the decades, more than one builder adopted the practice about the same time. By 1964, Alfred F. Smith was acquiring land in West Davis for his master-planned Stonegate development, which included a lake and golf course. In 1967, Gentry Development announced a 300-acre, 1400-house project that incorporated 19 acres of greenbelt and parks. Tom Gentry predicted that the open-space community would become a model for future development in Davis. Although Gentry had been developing in North Davis since 1965, he does not appear to have planned the greenbelt until the following year. Smith, though his planning was underway in the early 1960s, did not break ground until near the end of the decade. Although its origins in Davis cannot be credited to one developer, what is certain is that cluster planning had become de rigueur in locally by the last decades of the twentieth century.

Davis Builders and Developers

More large-scale regional builders also came to Davis starting in the 1960s. Walker Donant, for example, built University Farms No. 3 in 1960. Although the company was new to Davis, they had been constructing housing in Sacramento since at least 1949. The firm built a few hundred houses in Davis over the next fifteen years, just a fraction of what it was building in the Sacramento area during that period. The Stanley M. Davis Organization had hit its stride Davis by the 1960s, developing hundreds of houses east of Downtown along with its partners. Most of the local subdividers from the immediate post-war period had

constructed one or two subdivisions and then left real estate development. John Simmons, however, had gained momentum and by the late 1950s was recording three new subdivisions most years. Simmons remained an important Davis developer through the 1970s. Davis local John Whitcombe, who constructed his first house in 1959, was a newer entrant to the residential housing market. By 1970, he was an important local builder. In the 1960s, he built houses before moving on to apartment construction in the 1970s, becoming a pioneer in energy efficient construction techniques.

The Strengh Brothers probably influenced the aesthetics of the Davis housing market more than any other developers during this period. They entered the Davis market in 1962 with the first of their Ivy Town subdivisions. Bill and Jim Strengh, along with their architect Carter Sparks, were responsible for breaking the dominance of Tract Ranch style in the residential landscape of Davis. In the late 1950s, Strengh Brothers had taken over an uncle's development company and inherited its architectural plans, which were for Tract Ranch houses. After teaming up with Sparks, however, the Strenghs began offering Post-and-Beam designs.

Although the Strenghs and Sparks were in many respects opposites in terms of temperament and philosophy, their differences allowed them to complement one another's strengths. The Strenghs have described Sparks as the creative genius and give him credit for pushing them to use building practices normally associated with custom designs, such as finishing the rear elevation with the same materials and details as the main façade. Although Sparks insisted on more expensive fixtures at times, Post-and-Beam construction saved money on materials. But the artistic Sparks, who built about 50 custom houses as well as commercial and institutional buildings, could never have designed so many houses without the practical and business-minded Strenghs. Bill had been educated as an accountant, and the brothers kept an eye on the bottom line, pushed Sparks to meet deadlines, and reined in some of his excesses. The Strengh Brothers operation never had a money-losing year.

Residential Properties

Because of the vast expansion of Davis residential neighborhoods in the 1960s, most of the current housing stock in town was constructed during this period. Property types include apartment buildings

in a wide range of sizes, duplexes, single-family dwellings with shared walls, and free-standing single-family homes. Although some neighborhoods close to the University and Downtown were developed during this period, few empty lots were available for infill construction by this time, so most residential development took place at the edges of town.[...]

Multi-family Housing

The apartment building, which had been present in Davis since the late 1940s, began to emerge as an important building type during the period of explosive growth. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, most Davis apartment buildings were still no more than two stories. Typically, they had between five and twenty units. By this time, apartment buildings were fully accepted as a respectable housing type, particularly for students, and developers did not usually bother offering the range of amenities used to promote early examples. Cal Davis Apartments at 340 Ninth Street, a two-story, twelve-unit building is a typical example. With an L-shaped plan, exterior entrances to each unit, large surface parking lot and little exterior ornamentation, the building was constructed to offer practical and affordable housing. As the 1960s progressed, Davis developers began constructing more apartment buildings than previously, and the average multi-family building began to grow progressively larger. The pace of apartment development is illustrated by one builder's statistics: Robert C. Powell constructed about 4,000 apartment units between 1961 and 1972. By the mid-1970s, Davis had about 60 apartment buildings. Whereas older apartments were often infill projects, after 1965 whole streets could be filled with multi-building apartment complexes. Many of these buildings occupied most or all of one- to three-acre parcels, and were sometimes starkly pragmatic buildings. The large, flat-roofed apartment building at 515 Sycamore Lane, constructed in 1965 and surrounded by multi-family housing, is a typical example.

At the start of the 1970s, developers introduced a new residential building type to Davis: condominiums or "Townhouse homes." Stanley M. Davis began selling Covell Commons (one- and two-story units with shared walls set in a greenbelt) in 1971. Marketing stressed the opportunity for home ownership without the responsibilities of maintenance or yard work. In an echo of developers' promotion of Davis's first apartment units two decades earlier, the Woodland Daily Democrat praised the development as "the utmost in luxury living combined with leisure." Like apartments, the townhouse became a lasting fixture of Davis residential neighborhoods.

Subject Property

As evident on the 1921 Sanborn map (**Figure 1**), the subject property was once comprised of two lots, each with a single family residence. In c1963 the property was redeveloped with the current multi-family residential building (**Figure 3**). The builder was R&L Builders, but the architect/designer is unknown.

TABLE 1: BUILDING PERMITS

Date	Permit Number	Notes
1963	150	Building permit to construct 12 until apartment building.
1975		New fence
1977		Install sprinkler system
1981	11114	Garbage disposal
1999	99-3598	New roof
2006	06-3070	Replace sewer
2021	21-937	Tear off and re-roof

TABLE 2: OWNERS/OCCUPANTS

Year(s) of Occupation	Occupant(s)/Business	Notes
1970	Ken Shipley (Apt. #1)	student
1970	Roger Tusuada (Apt. #2)	student
1970	Laurel A. Warfield (Apt. #3)	student
1970	Patricia Pate (Apt. #4)	student
1970	Loa Semrau (Apt. #5)	student
1970	Margt A. Haas (Apt. #6)	student
1970	Eliz Benson (Apt. #7)	student
1970	Ruth Mechalis (Apt. #8)	student
1970	Mary A. Brunstetter (Apt. #9)	student
1970	Mary Dal Porto (Apt. #10)	student
1970	Ellen Treseder (Apt. #11)	student
1970	Jill Vandergrift (Apt. #12)	student
1975	Bruce F. Smith	Manager – Apartment #1
1977	Chamberlain (Owner)	
1981 - 2006	Yumi Chin (owner)	

*Recorded by: Amber Grady, ESA

*Date: June 2, 2022

Continuation

Update

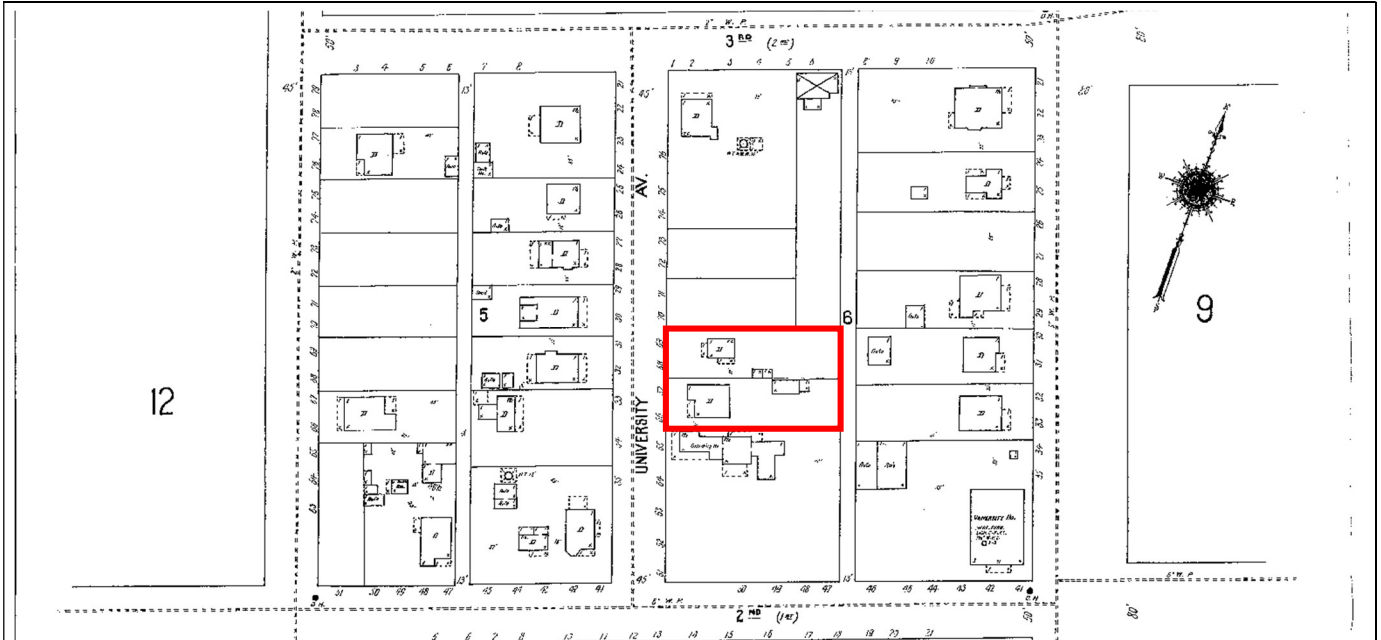


Figure 1: 1921-45 Sanborn Map



Source: UC Santa Barbara Library, Framefinder Aerial Imagery, CAS-65-130_14-213, 05/18/1965, accessed June 3, 2022.

Figure 2: 1965 Aerial Photograph



Source: UC Santa Barbara Library, Framefinder Aerial Imagery, CAS-2830_2-96, 03/21/1970, accessed June 3, 2022.

Figure 3: 1970 Aerial Photograph

Regulatory Framework

National Register of Historic Places

A property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) if it meets the National Register listing criteria at 36 CFR 60.4, as stated below:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and that:

- A) Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, or
- B) Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, or
- C) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, or
- D) Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

California Register of Historical Resources

To be eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) a historical resource must be significant under one or more of the following criteria:

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

City of Davis Landmark Resource

In addition to the National and California registers, the City of Davis provides for the additional designations of Landmark Resource and Merit Resource in their Historical Resources Management Zoning Code (40.23.060). To be eligible as a Landmark a resource must meet at least one of the four criteria at the local, state, or national level of significance and retain a high level of historic integrity.

- (1) Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns in the history of Davis, California, or the nation; or
- (2) Associated with the lives of significant persons in the history of Davis, California, or the nation; or
- (3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, architectural style or method of construction; or that represents the work of a master designer; or that possesses high artistic values; or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (4) Has yielded or may likely yield archaeological or anthropological information important in the study of history, prehistory, or human culture.

The following factors must also be considered:

- (1) A resource moved from its original location may be designated a landmark if it is significant primarily for its architectural value or it is one of the most important surviving structures associated with an important person or historic event.
- (2) A birthplace or grave may be designated a landmark if it is that of a historical figure of outstanding importance within the history of Davis, the state or the nation and there are no other appropriate sites or resources directly associated with his or her life or achievements.
- (3) A reconstructed building may be designated a landmark if the reconstruction is historically accurate and is based on sound historical documentation, is executed in a suitable environment, and if no other original structure survives that has the same historical association.
- (4) A resource achieving significance within the past fifty years may be designated a landmark if the resource is of exceptional importance within the history of Davis, the state or the nation.

City of Davis Merit Resource

In addition to the National and California registers, the City of Davis provides for the additional designations of Landmark Resource and Merit Resource in their Historical Resources Management Zoning Code (40.23.060). To be eligible as a Merit Resource must meet at least one of the four criteria and retain a high level of historic integrity. The four criteria to qualify as a Merit Resource as nearly identical to those for a Landmark except that Merit Resources only consider local significance.

The following factors must also be considered:

- (1) A resource moved from its original location may be designated a merit resource if it is significant for its architectural value or if an understanding of the associated important person or historic event has not been impaired by the relocation.
- (2) A birthplace or grave may be designated a merit resource if it is that of an historical figure of outstanding importance within the history of Davis and there are no other appropriate sites or resources directly associated with his or her life or achievements.
- (3) A reconstructed building may be designated a merit resource if the reconstruction is historically accurate and is based on sound historical documentation, is executed in a suitable environment, and if no other original structure survives that has the same historical association.
- (4) A resource achieving significance within the past fifty years may be designated a merit resource if it is of exceptional importance within the history of Davis.

Even if a resource is not listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register, the lead agency may consider the resource to be an "historical resource" for the purposes of CEQA provided that the lead agency determination is supported by substantial evidence (CEQA Guidelines 14 CCR 15064.5).

Evaluation

The subject property at 218 University Avenue was evaluated for potential historic significance under National Register Criteria A through D, California Register Criteria 1 through 4, Davis Landmark Criteria 1 through 4, and Davis Merit Resource Criteria 1 through 4. While the wording is slightly different for each of the four criteria for the National Register, California Register, Davis Landmark, and Davis Merit Resource eligibility, they each align to cover the same potential significance criterion. A/1/1/1

*Recorded by: Amber Grady, ESA

*Date: June 2, 2022

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covers associations with significant historical events, B/2/2/2 covers significant people, C/3/3/3 covers significant architecture, and D/4/4/4 covers the information potential of a site.

A/1/1/1 - Events

The subject property falls into the Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971) significance theme. Early on residential development was scattered throughout the original grid and beyond into the more rural, agricultural areas. The 1888 Sanborn map only includes the portion of town bounded by D Street (formerly Laurel) to the west, 1st Street (formerly Front Street) to the south, I Street to the east (formerly Pine), and 5th Street (formerly 4th Street) to the north. The block that includes the subject property does not appear on Sanborn maps until 1921. The subject property was redeveloped with the current building in c1963, during a period of residential growth that was at least partially spurred by the expansion of offerings and growing student body at UC Davis. Archival review does not indicate that there are any significant associations between 218 University Avenue and important events or patterns in history. While the building appears to have always been a rental property that has provided housing for the community, it does not appear to rise above the typical associations with this type of residential development or the contextual period of development of 1959 – 1971. Therefore, it is recommended ineligible under Criteria A/1/1/1.

B/2/2/2 – Persons/Businesses

Archival review also does not indicate that there are any significant associations between 218 University Avenue and significant persons. As a rental property for over 60 years the 12 units have housed a variety of people. None of the people identified in the archival record as associated with the property were determined to have made significant contributions to local, state, and/or national history. Additionally, as a residential use, even if one or more of the transient residents had made significant contributions to local, state, and/or national history, it is unlikely that those significant contributions would have been associated with their residence. As research does not indicate that 218 University Avenue is significantly associated with the productive life of any significant person, it is recommended ineligible under Criteria B/2/2/2.

C/3/3/3 – Design/Engineering

The subject property at 218 University Avenue is not significant for its design or engineering. “In the late 1940s, developers pioneered the use of a building type that would become a permanent feature of the Davis landscape: the apartment building.”² 218 University Avenue is a typical multi-family apartment complex constructed in the 1950s and 60s with Ranch-inspired architecture. The architect for the original design is unknown and the builder has been identified as R&L Builders. It is a common building type and style for the era and does not appear to be the work of a master architect. For these reasons, 218 University Avenue is recommended ineligible under Criterion C/3/3/3.

D/4/4/4 – Information Potential

Criterion D/4/4/4 applies to properties that have the potential to inform important research questions about human history. According to National Register Bulletin 15, to qualify for listing, the property must “have or have had information to contribute to our understanding of human history or prehistory and the information must be considered important.” 218 University Avenue does not meet this criterion and is recommended ineligible under Criterion D/4/4/4.

Integrity

For a property to be eligible for listing on the National Register, California Register, or as Landmark or Merit resources per the City of Davis regulations it must meet one of the eligibility criteria discussed above as well as retain sufficient integrity. However, the subject property does not meet any of the eligibility criteria for significance; therefore, a discussion of integrity is not necessary.

Recommendation

ESA recommends 218 University Avenue ineligible for listing on the National Register or California Register or locally as a Davis Landmark or Merit Resource.

*B12. References: (Continued from page 2)

1921-1945 Sanborn Map. Proquest Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970. Accessed via the Los Angeles Public Library.
https://digitalsanbornmaps-proquest-com.ezproxy.lapl.org/browse_maps/5/499/2201/2243/22471?accountid=6749

Brunzell Historical. Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update. 2015.

City of Davis. Permit #150. 1963.

² Brunzell Historical, *Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update*, 2015, page 28.

*Recorded by: Amber Grady, ESA

*Date: June 2, 2022

Continuation

Update

City of Davis. Permit #(unknown). 1975.

City of Davis. Permit #(unknown). 1977.

City of Davis. Permit #11114. 1981.

City of Davis. Permit #99-3598. 1999.

City of Davis. Permit #06-3070. 2006.

City of Davis. Permit #21-937. 2021.

UC Santa Barbara Library. Framefinder Aerial Imagery, CAS-65-130_14-130, 05/18/1965. Accessed June 3, 2022.

UC Santa Barbara Library. Framefinder Aerial Imagery, CAS-2830_2-96, 03/21/1970. Accessed June 3, 2022.

Yolo County Assessor's Parcel Data. ParcelQuest.com. Accessed June 10, 2022.