

HISTORIC RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

**CYPRESS HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION
CYPRESS, ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

LSA

November 2023

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

LSA conducted a Historic Resources Assessment (HRA) for the Cypress Housing Element Implementation Cypress, Orange County, California. The assessment included archival research, a field survey, and this report. The property that is the subject of this study is approximately 125 acres in size and is currently developed with the Los Alamitos Race Course, including the track, grandstands, barns/stables, offices, parking lots, and other built environment features. The City of Cypress (City) is the Lead Agency responsible for preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addressing potential environmental impacts associated with the programmatic update to the City's General Plan, Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan (LASP), Cypress Town Center and Commons Specific Plan 2.0, Cypress Business and Professional Center Specific Plan, and Zoning Ordinance (proposed project). The Los Alamitos Race Course property has been identified as an opportunity site for future housing development. Although the proposed rezoning action would not directly result in any physical development, this study is being done as part of the environmental review process to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The purpose of the study is to document the Los Alamitos Race Course and evaluate it for historical significance in compliance with CEQA. To do this, LSA conducted historical background research, carried out an intensive-level field survey, and evaluated the race course under the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). No City criteria for evaluating historical significance were found.

As a result of these efforts, the Los Alamitos Race Course appears eligible for listing in the National Register and the California Register under Criteria A/1 and B/2. Under Criteria A/1, it is significant for its association with the establishment and success of organized quarter horse racing in California. Under Criteria B/2, it is significant for its association with Frank Vessels, Sr. who played a significant role in developing quarter horse racing in California.

When Frank Vessels established his cattle and horse ranch in Cypress in 1946, quarter horse racing had not yet been ruled legal in California. In fact, the breed had only been officially named in 1940 when the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) was established. At that time, most of the important and influential breeders were located in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado. In order to jump start quarter horse breeding at his Cypress ranch, Vessels traveled through Texas and Oklahoma buying mares and the famous stallion *Clabber*. *Clabber*, also known as the Iron Horse, was named the World's Champion Quarter Horse by the AQHA in 1941. He sired numerous winners and was eventually inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame. Later (1960), Vessels acquired *Go Man Go* as a breeding stallion. *Go Man Go* had an illustrious racing career, sired numerous winners, and was inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame. The status of these horses helped solidify Vessels' importance as a breeder.

In 1947, Vessels built a racetrack at his ranch. Initially it was used for vehicle racing, but in August 1947 a crowd of a thousand or more people showed up to watch the first full card of quarter horse racing, six non-pari-mutuel races (fans could not bet on the horses). The races soon became a weekly event, but attendance was so high that Vessels scaled back to monthly races. At this time, it was only legal to bet on thoroughbred horse races and standardbreds (trotters). In 1948, the State Attorney General ruled that quarter horse racing was legal in California because registered quarter

horses were a recognized breed. However, the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB), which was made up of breeders of thoroughbreds, refused to allow betting on quarter horse races. This prompted the breeders of quarter horses to organize. Vessels founded and became president of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association (PCQHA), a position he held for several years. On behalf of the PCQHA, an affiliate of the AQHA, Vessels began lobbying Sacramento for pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse racing.

Pari-mutuel wagering plays an important, but perhaps little known role in the improvement of California's agriculture industries. California has long been a leader in agriculture. This dominance is, in part, a result of a complex system that was specifically established to improve and protect all manner of agriculture and to facilitate implementation of advancements through communication and education. This system includes numerous institutions and organizations including the University of California, the county fair system, district agricultural groups, and organizations like the CHRB. Betting is important because it generates funds to support these endeavors and contributes to the State's General Fund. In addition, by law, a portion of the races must benefit charities, including CHRB-approved racing charities.

Vessels was successful in his lobbying efforts on behalf of the PCQHA. Pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse races was approved by the State Legislature in 1949 and, in 1950, the CHRB approved pari-mutuel betting and an 11-day season at Vessels' track starting in December 1951. Since 1951, Los Alamitos has been the home of four races worth over \$1 million dollars, including quarter horse racing's only \$2 million guaranteed race—the Los Alamitos Two Million Futurity. By 1953, a new track (in the current location) was under construction at Vessels' ranch; it opened in time for the 1954 Fall meet. The track prospered throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The period of significance for the Los Alamitos Race Course is 1954 to 1970. The period of significance is the time when historic events occurred that contribute to the significance of the property. In this case, 1954 was the year when the track was built at the current location and 1970 was the end of the golden age of horse racing. Although Los Alamitos Race Course has sustained alterations to most, if not all, of its buildings and features, including the oval racetrack, it retains enough integrity to convey an association with its period of significance. All of the major features remain, including the grandstand, barns, clubhouse, and, of course, the race track itself.

The Los Alamitos Race Course is a "historical resource" for the purposes of CEQA. CEQA establishes that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (Public Resources Code [PRC] §21084.1). "Substantial adverse change," according to PRC Section 5020.1(q), "means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired." It is LSA's understanding that, because the Los Alamitos Race Course has been identified as a potential opportunity site for housing, it may be partially or completely demolished. Should the Los Alamitos Race Course be demolished, it would constitute a significant unavoidable impact to historical resources that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. Currently, the proposed project is a programmatic update to the City's General Plan, Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan, Cypress Town Center and Commons Specific Plan 2.0, Cypress Business and Professional Center Specific Plan, and Zoning Ordinance and would not directly result in physical development. Consequently, the specific location and configuration of future development at the Race Course site has not yet been determined and is not under consideration as part the programmatic update. LSA

recommends that, if a specific project is proposed that does not involve full demolition, an impacts assessment be prepared using the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. If appropriate, mitigation measures may be recommended at that time.

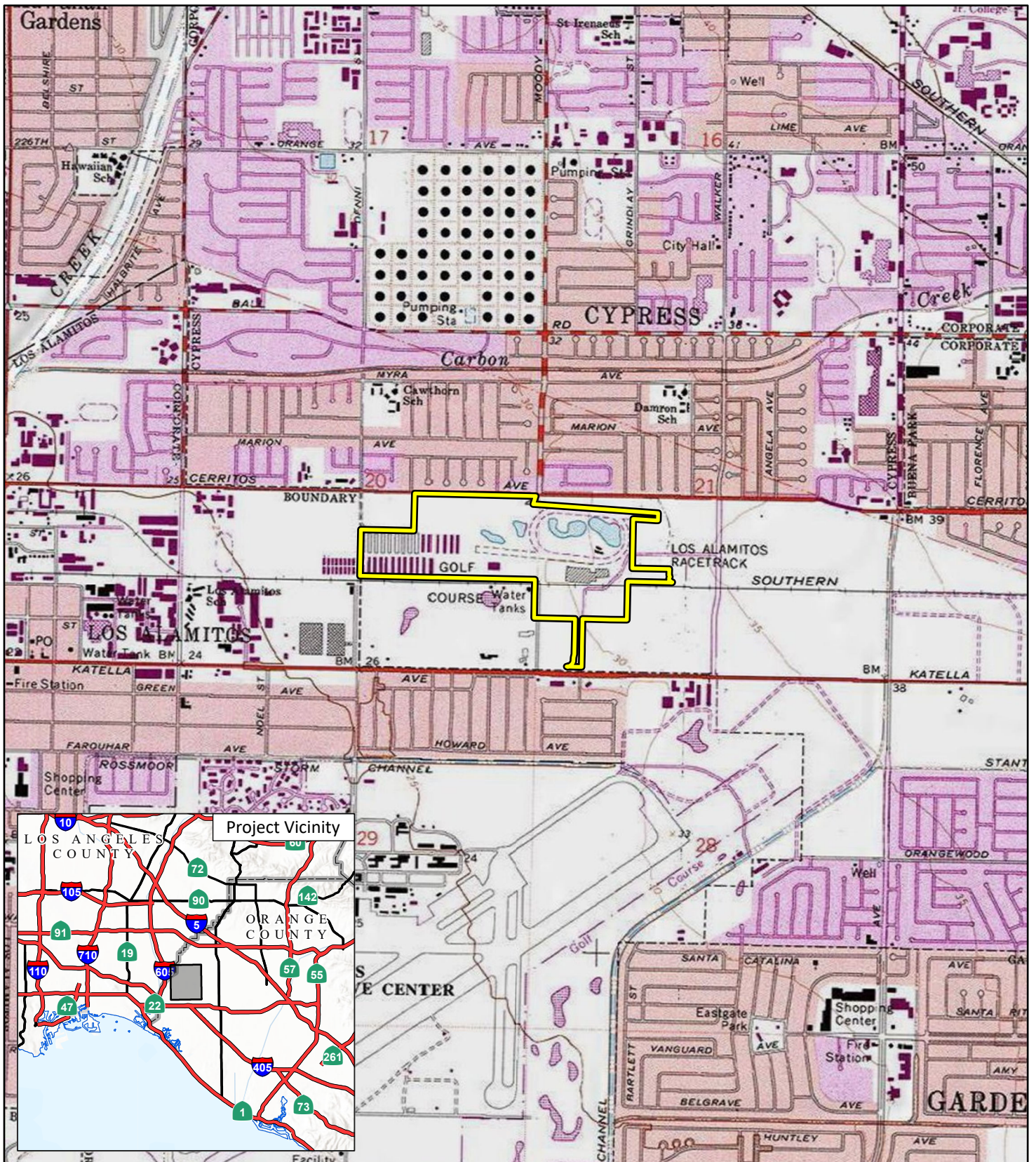
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INTRODUCTION

At the request of the City of Cypress (City), LSA completed a Historic Resources Assessment (HRA) of the Los Alamitos Race Course in Cypress, Orange County, California (see Figures 1 and 2). The approximately 125-acre subject property, Assessor's Parcel Numbers 241-081-02, 241-221-24, and 241-221-33, is located at 4961 Katella Avenue, in Township 4 South, Range 11 West, Sections 20, 21, 28, and 29, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian, as depicted on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Los Alamitos, California* 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map. The study is part of the environmental review process for the proposed programmatic update to the City's General Plan, the Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan, and Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the 2021–2029 Housing Element, which has identified the Los Alamitos Race Course property as an opportunity site for future housing development. The City, as Lead Agency for the project, required the study in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code [PRC] § 21000, et seq.).

LSA completed this study to provide the City with the necessary information and analysis to determine, as mandated by CEQA, whether Los Alamitos Race Course is a "historical resource" as defined by CEQA. To accomplish this, LSA conducted historical background research, carried out an intensive-level field survey, and evaluated the property using the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). No City criteria for evaluating historical significance were found. The following report is a complete account of the methods, results, and final conclusion of the study.




 Project Location

FIGURE 1

LSA



0 1000 2000
FEET

SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Quad - Los Alamitos (1981), CA

I:\CCP2201.01\GIS\Pro\4961 Katella Ave.aprx (11/17/2022)

Cypress Housing Element Implementation
Project Location and Vicinity



LSA


 Project Location

FIGURE 2



0 500 1000
FEET

SOURCE: Google Imagery (2021)

I:\CCP2201.01\GIS\Pro\4961 Katella Ave.aprx (11/17/2022)

Cypress Housing Element Implementation
Project Location and Vicinity

METHODS

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

LSA completed archival research during the months of May, June, October, and November 2022. Research methods focused on the review of a variety of primary and secondary source materials relating to the history and development of the subject property. Sources included, but were not limited to, information provided by and on file at the Los Alamitos Race Course, online sources, published literature in local and regional history, news articles, historic aerial photographs, and historic maps. Historical themes included horse racing, quarter horses, Frank Vessels, Sr., and pari-mutuel betting in California. A complete list of all references is included at the end of this report.

FIELD SURVEY

On June 10, 2022, LSA architectural historian, Casey Tibbet, M.A., and LSA photographer Dennis Lechner conducted an intensive-level architectural survey of the Los Alamitos Race Course facility. The pair was escorted by Facilities Manager Frank Sherren, who provided information about most of the buildings and features, as well as historical information about the facility. The trio began with the clubhouse/grandstand building including, but not limited to, Burgart's bar, the Cypress Room, the Vessels Club restaurant, the Finish Line room, the betting area, box seating, and the jockeys' room. They then toured the barns and other features. During the survey, Mr. Lechner took numerous photographs of the buildings and track, as well as overview shots. Ms. Tibbet made notations regarding the structural and architectural characteristics and current conditions of the buildings and features. She also made notes regarding the historical information provided by Mr. Sherren.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Archival research was completed to develop relevant historic contexts for Los Alamitos Race Course. These included the settlement and development of Cypress, the history of horse racing with a focus on quarter horses and pari-mutuel betting in California, the history of Los Alamitos Race Course, and Frank Vessels, Sr. who developed Los Alamitos Race Course and was an influential figure in quarter horse racing in California.

Settlement and Development

The historic period in California is divided into three periods: Spanish/Mission Period (1769–1821), Mexican/Rancho Period (1821–1848), and the American Period (1848–Present). Spanish exploration of southern California began in the late 1700s as expeditions began seeking routes from San Diego to the Los Angeles basin and further regions of “Alta California.” One of the logical, geographic passages between the Pacific Coast and the Los Angeles Basin was what is now known as Santa Ana Canyon. Some of the more notable and documented explorers to use this route, which went through what would become Orange County, were Don Gaspar Portolá, Juan Bautista de Anza, and Don Pedro Fages. In 1784, General Pedro Fages received a petition from three of his soldiers who wanted land to build homes and graze the cattle they had acquired (Carpenter 2003). Fages agreed and that same year (1784), Manuel Perez Nieto was granted 300,000 acres, which became known as Los Nietos and included the area that would become Cypress (Ibid.). After Manuel’s death in 1804, the land was divided among his four surviving children, and Juan Jose Nieto received the acres called Los Alamitos (approximately 28,000 acres) and Los Coyotes (approximately 49,000 acres), which included Cypress (Ibid.). In 1806, Nieto built an adobe house in the southwest corner of Rancho Los Alamitos (Ibid.).

In 1821, Mexico won independence from Spain and took over Alta California. In 1834, Juan Jose Nieto was formally granted Los Alamitos by Governor Juan Figueroa and a few months later sold it to the governor for just \$500 (Carpenter 2003). Figueroa later sold it to Abel Stearns in 1842 (Ibid.). Eventually Stearns owned both ranchos (Los Alamitos and Los Coyotes) and “built up the largest land and cattle empire in the area” (City of Cypress n.d.:2).

In 1848, Alta California came under control of the United States and, in 1850, it was admitted to the Union. In 1861, Stearns borrowed on the Rancho from money lender Michael Reese to finance a business venture in Los Angeles (Carpenter 2003). By 1865, Stearns was in jeopardy of losing his land to Reese, so a group of his friends formed the Robinson Trust to save him from bankruptcy (Carpenter 2003). In 1866, Reese foreclosed on a portion of the Rancho and began leasing it to the Bixbys who were sheep farmers from Maine (Carpenter 2003). Two years later, in 1868, the Trust began to sell 120- to 160-acre tracts and by the time Stearns died in 1871, he was on his way to another fortune (Ibid.; Carpenter 2003).

The 1880s was a boom period in Southern California that helped complete “the transition from range land to agricultural economy” (City of Cypress n.d.:3). Between 1866 and 1884, the population of Los Angeles increased from approximately 12,000 to around 100,000; other cities were also

expanding rapidly (Ibid.). Orange County was formed in 1889, putting half of Rancho Los Alamitos in Los Angeles County and half in Orange (Carpenter 2003). In 1881, John and Jotham Bixby and Isaac Hellman (a banker) bought Rancho Los Alamitos and joined it to Rancho Los Cerritos (Carpenter 2003). They formed the Alamitos Land Company to subdivide part of the Rancho into farm lands (Carpenter 2003:28). This represents the beginnings of what would become Cypress.

By the late 1880s, white and sweet potatoes, as well as sugar beets were the area's main crops (City of Cypress n.d.). Dairy farming, which was supported by the beet farming, was a major industry and nearby Buena Park was at its center (City of Cypress n.d.). In the Cypress area, almost everyone had cows, but sorghum was what the area was really known for (Ibid.). In 1889, the McWilliams family moved to the area, planted sorghum, and established a makeshift sorghum processing plant (Ibid.). In its first year, it processed 100 gallons of syrup (Ibid.). Soon other farmers planted sorghum and the industry steadily expanded (Ibid.). In 1907, a regular mill was built that processed 15,000 gallons of syrup its first year (Ibid.).

As more people moved into the area, the demand grew for schools. In the early 1890s, there were two schools, Centralia and Bloomfield (City of Cypress n.d.). In 1895, the Cypress School District was formed, and a building was constructed on an acre of land donated by Charles Lee Damron (Ibid.). The new school was named Cypress School because of the cypress trees planted around the school yard as a windbreak. For many years, it was the only school in the district (Ibid.; Epting 2014). "In 1906, Pacific Electric built a line to the area to connect Los Angeles to Santa Ana" and development began to cluster around the rail station "at what is now the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Walker Street" approximately two miles northeast of the subject property (City of Cypress n.d.:5). At that time, the community was nicknamed Waterville due to the preponderance of artesian wells in the area, but the train station was named Cypress reportedly to be consistent with the school (Carpenter 2003; City of Cypress n.d.). In 1924, the school was replaced with a larger building that became the center of the community's social life (Ibid.).

During the Depression era, the area was hard hit by the 1933 Long Beach earthquake, which damaged Cypress School, and the 1938 flood, which left most of Waterville under 2 to 3 feet of water (City of Cypress n.d.). The school was rebuilt in 1936 using Public Works Administration (PWA) funds and was still the only school in the Cypress School District (Epting 2014). Although rural communities like Waterville suffered less from the Depression than heavily industrialized cities, people still struggled. The needy were assisted by a variety of federal relief programs and many school children received free hot lunches (City of Cypress n.d.).

"In 1910, a local farmer named George Miller formed the Southern California Dairy Association, and by the 1940s, dairies emerged as the community's leading industry" (City of Cypress n.d.:7). The World War II years brought many changes to the area as several military facilities moved nearby. These included the United States Naval Station in Los Alamitos (next to Cypress), the Seal Beach Ammunition Depot, the United States Naval Air Station in Santa Ana, the Santa Ana Army Air Base, and Irvine Park, which was used as an Army training camp (City of Cypress n.d.). Aircraft plants and shipyards created jobs in nearby communities such as Long Beach and Santa Monica. The combination of new employment opportunities and men joining the armed services created a shortage of labor in the fields (Ibid.). To alleviate the shortage, workers from Mexico were brought

in through treaty arrangements and later German prisoners of war were used to harvest crops (Ibid.).

After the war, returning GIs created such a big demand for housing in surrounding areas that many farmers relocated to Waterville (City of Cypress n.d.). By the late 1940s, Waterville was the third largest dairy district in the country, but dairies were not the only game in town (Ibid.). In 1946, Kentucky-born entrepreneur Frank Vessels Sr. bought “435 acres of fog-enshrouded drainage” in the community (Chamberlain 2000). Initially, he used the acreage to pasture Hereford cattle and then quarter horses, but by the summer of 1947, he had built a racetrack on the property (Ibid.). At first, the track was used for motorcycle racing and horse racing, but soon was devoted solely to quarter horse racing. The track, which would become Los Alamitos Race Course, played important roles in the development of quarter horse racing in California, as well as the local economy.

Over time, portions of the property originally bought by Frank Vessels, Sr. were sold and incrementally redeveloped into a mix of urban land uses, including recreational, commercial, and residential uses. By 1992, a golf course to the northwest and southwest of the track are visible in aerial photographs (Historicaerials.com var.). By 2005, several commercial buildings and parking lots had been constructed east of the track along Walker Street (Ibid.). Between 2005 and 2009, a church replaced part of the golf course southwest of the track (Ibid.). After Hollywood Park closed in December 2013, the track itself was changed to accommodate thoroughbred racing. Circa 2019, the Ovation at Flora Park retirement community was built south of the barns and southwest of the track (Ibid.) on land that was formerly occupied by a golf course. An apartment building, townhomes, a hotel, and a shopping center are currently under construction on areas that were formerly used as parking lots for the race track.

When Waterville incorporated in 1956, it took the name Dairy City (Epting 2014). In the 1950s, Dairy City (now Cypress), Dairyland (now La Palma), and Dairy Valley (now Cerritos) were collectively known as “Moo-Valley” (City of Cypress n.d.). In 1957, a year after incorporation, Dairy City was renamed Cypress (Ibid.). In the 1960s, skyrocketing real estate prices in Moo Valley resulted in an exodus of dairy farmers to Riverside County (Whiting 2015). Today, Cypress is a fully developed suburban community with a population of approximately 50,000 in an approximately 6.5 square-mile area.

History of Horse Racing

Except where noted, the following was excerpted from an article written by John Dizikes (Dizikes 2001:346-347).

With a history extending from ancient Egypt, the Grecian Olympic Games, and Roman chariot races through medieval and early modern Europe, horse racing emerged in late 17th century America in the South, the Middle Atlantic colonies, and New York. Although the colonists who founded Jamestown in 1607 did not have any horses, every member of the first King’s Council of Virginia had raced or bred horses in England, and they brought that aspect of their culture with them (Longrigg 1972). The principal evidence about quarter-mile racing in the 17th century comes from the law courts. The characteristics of the earliest Virginia racing were rigid social stratification (only a member of the landed gentry, a gentleman, could “make a race”); wagers made in goods as well as

money; fraudulent rigging of matches; and law-courts as the only available authority, judging racing disputes and enforcing racing debts (Longrigg 1972). In New England, as in the South, a primitive type of racing over a quarter-mile distance predominated until 1665 when Sir Richard Nicholls, who had received the surrender of New Amsterdam before becoming the first Governor of New York, dedicated America's first full-sized racecourse, at a wide-open plain of good grass on Long Island near modern Jamaica in Nassau County (Longrigg 1972). As the sport developed in the 18th century, certain features stood out. In the absence of a hereditary aristocracy to support it, horse racing was intertwined with commerce. Proximity to cities was essential; city dwellers paid admissions and their betting fueled the sport.

Horse racing flourished in the Antebellum Era. Rampant dishonesty provoked efforts to suppress or restrict it, followed by further expansion. Races were two or three miles long, with several heats. The pace was slow since horses ran on dirt tracks, not turf. Sectional tensions were mirrored in "North versus South" match races. One such event in 1823 at the Union Course on Long Island (New York had by now established its predominance) drew an estimated 60,000 spectators. However, it was not until after the Civil War in 1868 when the American Stud Book was started, and horse racing began to be organized (The Jockey Club UK 2022).

When the Civil War devastated racing in the South, the North and West established preeminence. Kentucky, as a breeding center, was the major exception. United States horse racing's premier event, the Kentucky Derby, was first run in 1875 at the newly opened Churchill Downs in Louisville. By the 1890s, 300 racetracks were operating. Wealthy plutocrats like Leonard Jerome, August Belmont, William Whitney, and others built larger racetracks and established stables. Stakes increased and attendance swelled. Jockeys such as "Snapper" Garrison, Isaac Murphy, and Todd Sloan became celebrities, as did the horses they rode, including Hanover, Salvador, and Sysonby. Led by Sloan, U.S. jockeys revolutionized the style of riding by adopting the forward seat, America's most important contribution to the sport. While bookmakers' fees provided a major source of revenue for racetracks, their presence added to the pervasive sense of underhanded dealing.

Progressive Era reformers almost ended professional horse racing, but by reforming itself, the sport survived and entered a golden age from 1920 to around 1970. Parimutuel machines replaced bookmakers, automatic starting gates and photo finish cameras removed sources of contention, and stricter supervision reduced the doping of horses and illegal gambling. Women were more often present at the track, behavior became more orderly, and handsome new racetracks offered larger purses. Brilliant jockeys such as Earl Sande, Eddie Arcaro, and Willie Shoemaker and horses like Man o' War, Whirlaway, Citation, and Secretariat captured the nation's attention. Fans avidly followed horse racing's "Triple Crown" events: the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness at Baltimore's Pimlico track, and the Belmont Stakes in New York. Harness racing with the rider in a sulky (a low two-wheeled vehicle harnessed to the horse), dating to the 1830s in America, enjoyed a considerable vogue after World War II.

Horse racing fell on hard times as a spectator event in the later 20th century as lotteries, casinos, off-track betting, and other professional sports usurped the track's appeal. Nevertheless, horse racing continued to draw a small, but loyal fan base.

California Horse Racing

Except where noted, this section was excerpted from the California Senate Committee on Governmental Organization Informational Hearing: Horse Racing in California (July 21, 2005, pages 2 and 3).

California voters, at the urging of the Legislature, approved a state constitutional amendment in 1933 to create the pari-mutuel wagering system that supports horse racing as we know it today. The 1933 measure established the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) to oversee the industry with the goal of protecting the public from fraud, promoting California agriculture and quality racehorse breeding, and encouraging expansion of the racing industry to maximize tax revenues in the public interest. The CHRB, whose seven members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate, licenses racing associations such as the Los Angeles Turf Club or the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Racing Association. It licenses all simulcast wagering facilities and all persons (except the general public) who participate in racing with pari-mutuel wagering.

Wagering, Winnings and Revenues

As of the year 2000, wagers on horse races could be placed at 34 sites across the state, including California's 14 licensed racetracks and 20 off-track locations, known as simulcast facilities. (The closing of Hollywood Park and other venues in the 21st century has since reduced that number). During 1999–2000, track wagers made up less than 22 percent of the wagering in California; off-track betting at the various simulcast facilities in the state accounted for nearly 40 percent and the remainder came from out-of-state wagers placed on California races. Total wagers were \$3.95 billion in 1999–2000; by comparison, the California State Lottery grossed \$2.6 billion that year.

Eighty percent of the money bet by the fans of California horse racing is returned to winning ticket holders. Twenty percent is used as “takeout” for supporting purposes such as the purses for winning owners and jockeys, racetrack commissions, off-track betting operations, and taxes.

The State's horse racing revenue comes primarily from license fees, which are based on percentages of pari-mutuel wagers. The state received \$44 million from wagering in 1999–2000, including \$7.5 million that went to the State's General Fund. The remainder went to the Fair and Exposition Fund for specific uses, such as funding the CHRB and for support of the county fairs and district agricultural associations. In addition, sales taxes of \$3.9 million were paid on horse sales and another \$7.9 million went to local governments in track fees that year. Pursuant to the California Business and Professions Code, Division 8, Chapter 4, Article 7, Section 19550, each racing association must conduct a portion of its races for the benefit of charities, including racing-related charities that are approved by the CHRB. Donations to these totaled more than \$1,000,000 in 1999–2000. An example of this at Los Alamitos Race Course is the annual Weiner Nationals event, which has raised money for local animal shelters for the past 26 years and is one of the facility's best attended events.

“Since 1951, Los Alamitos has been the nation's premier quarter horse track and the home of four races worth over \$1 million dollars, including quarter horse racing's only \$2 million guaranteed race - the Los Alamitos Two Million Futurity. Los Alamitos' other million-dollar races are the Golden State Million Futurity, the Ed Burke Million Futurity and the Los Alamitos Super Derby. Los Alamitos is also the home of the prestigious \$750,000 Champion of Champions” (Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Racing Association 2023).

California-Bred Horses

Because promoting agriculture and high-quality racehorses in California was a central theme of the 1933 horse-racing measure, there are incentives for breeding California horses that win races. Bonuses total approximately \$15 million each year to breeders, stallion owners and owners of race horses. By law, associations of horse owners and breeders make these awards as a percentage of the annual amount earned by California-bred or California-conceived horses in qualifying races. For example, the Breeder Award was nearly 16 percent of the eligible purse earned in 2000 and the Stallion Award was 12 percent. The Owners Award pays a 30 percent bonus for California-bred horses that finish 1st through 5th in specific types of races. A 20 percent bonus goes to the owners of horses that win certain claiming races (a *claiming race* is one with conditions governing the types of horses entered, in which every horse is available for purchase for the price stated in the program). The Horse Racing Law also requires that at least one race per racing day be restricted to California-bred horses. Further, racing associations are required to allocate at least 10 percent of their total stakes dollars to stakes that are limited only to California-bred horses (a *stakes race* is a race in which the owners of the entered horses contribute to the purse, usually through a nominating fee and an entry fee). Roughly \$15 million is offered annually in restricted race purses.

Annual Foal Crop for Top Racehorse-Producing States

State	1998	1999
Kentucky	9,488	9,817
Florida	3,894	4,341
California	3,209	3,250
Texas	2,251	1,933
New York	1,340	1,351

Source: California Horse Racing Board (CHRB).

American Quarter Horse

The American quarter horse, or simply quarter horse, has its origins in the 1600s when horses that had been brought to the country by Spaniards were bred with English thoroughbreds brought to the country by colonists (Hedgpeth 1990). The Spanish horses, first ridden by the conquistadors during the conquest of Mexico and later by the Chickasaw, were a cross between the North African Barb and the native Spanish stock (Hedgpeth 1990). They were bred with the colonists' English stock as early as 1611, eventually becoming known as the American Quarter Running Horse because of the quarter mile distance that was most often run in Colonial racing (Hedgpeth 1990). In 1752, Virginian John Randolph imported Janus, grandson of Godolphin Arabian, one of the three foundation sires (Hedgpeth 1990). Janus' off-spring, which were characterized by “compactness of form, strength

and power”, were the proto-type of the American quarter horse (Hedgpeth 1990). Following the Revolutionary War (1776), interest in thoroughbred racing outpaced interest in short distance racing; the quick and sturdy quarter horse, which was well-suited to life on the frontier, moved west (Hedgpeth 1990).

In the Southwest, fast horses and good cow ponies were crossbred with no particular attention paid to maintaining a breed (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). Complicating the matter further, horses were commonly named after people and the names were often changed when the horses were sold (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015).

In 1805, Sir Archy was foaled in Virginia (Thoroughbred Heritage 1997–2005). Considered to be the first great thoroughbred stallion born in America, Sir Archy had a short, but distinguished racing career before being purchased in 1809 by the Governor of North Carolina and sent to stud (Thoroughbred Heritage 1997–2005). Sir Archy’s progeny were “the most important influences in the development of quarter horses during the next half century” (Hedgpeth 1990). “Both Steel Dust and Shiloh, foundation stallions of the modern quarter horse, trace back to Sir Archy” (Hedgpeth 1990). Two other important stallions around the same time as Sir Archy were Printer and Tiger (Hedgpeth 1990). However, the breed was not complete until mixed with the “Mustang, a free-roaming, far-ranging wild descendent of the Barb” (Hedgpeth 1990). The Mustang, when crossed with the descendants of Janus, Sir Archy, Printer, and Tiger, resulted in a horse unique to America (Hedgpeth 1990).

In Texas, the quarter horse became more than just a short racer, it became a cow horse (Hedgpeth 1990). “Most all of the important quarter horse lines were represented in the open range and trail-driving era in Texas. The legendary Steel Dust [traced to Sir Archy] came to Texas around 1844, and five years later, the great horse Shiloh also arrived. Shiloh’s son Billy, out of a daughter of Steel Dust, became the fountainhead of Texas quarter horses” (Hedgpeth 1990; Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). However, most modern quarter horses trace to Peter McCue foaled in 1895 in Illinois (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). Quarter horses, often called Steeldusts, were hugely popular among cowboys. The name Steeldusts or Steel Dust horses was “common until the American Quarter Horse Association was established [1940] and the name quarter horse was officially adopted” (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015).

Important Quarter Horse Breeders

Samuel Watkins of Illinois was an important early breeder who provided many of the Texas breeders with their foundation horses such as Harmon Baker, Hickory Bill, and Peter McCue (Hedgpeth 1990). Another of the early breeders was William Anson in Christoval, Texas, by way of England (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). He was the first to try to define the quarter horse as a distinct breed and to concentrate bloodlines (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). Anson bred many quarter horse mares to his horses Jim Ned (from Billy) and Harmon Baker (son of Peter McCue) (Hedgpeth 1990). W.T. Waggoner from Vernon and Fort Worth, Texas, was known for collecting and then breeding the fastest horses he could find (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). The term “*Waggoner bred*” was considered pedigree enough for registration—so esteemed were his horses by other breeders and by founders of the breed association” (Oklahoma State University 1995–2015). A few other noteworthy breeders were Ott Adams and George Clegg from south Texas, Coke

T. Roberds, the last owner of Peter McCue, Samuel Coke Blake from Oklahoma, and Dan Casement out of Kansas and Colorado who was instrumental in organizing the American Quarter Horse Association (Hedgpeth 1990; American Quarter Horse Association 1986).

The American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) was established in March 1940 when the leading breeders of quarter horses from all over the United States met at the Fort Worth Fat Stock show (Denhardt 1967). By the end of 1942, the membership numbered 279 breeders in 16 states, and 1,287 horses had been registered (Denhardt 1967). Persons important to the quarter horse industry included Bob and Jack Casement, Jack Hutchins, Lee Underwood, Jim Minnick, Bill Warren, Helen Michaelis and Bob Denhardt, and in California specifically, Frank Vessels, Sr. (Denhardt 1967).

Frank Vessels, Sr. and the Los Alamitos Race Course

Frank Vessels was born in Elizabethtown, Kentucky in 1898 (Ancestry.com var.). In 1920, he was living in San Bernardino County, California, married to Marth Grace Hagey (known as Grace), and working as an attendant at the State hospital (Ibid.; *San Bernardino County Sun* 1920). By 1922, the Vessels had relocated to Huntington Beach and Frank had a business selling boilers and pipe fittings in Santa Fe Springs (Ancestry.com var.; *Santa Ana Register* 1922). In the late 1920s and 1930s, news articles revealed that Frank had at least one oil well in Huntington Beach (1927), a construction business called Industrial Engineering Company in Long Beach where the Vessels also lived (1930), and he owned a 10-acre citrus grove in San Bernardino County (1935). In 1935, it was reported that plans for an \$11,000, nine-room Colonial style home and garage designed by architect George Kahrs for Frank Vessels, manager of the Oil Field Construction Company, were being plan checked (*Long Beach Sun* 1935). The residence (still extant) was located at 4470 Olive Avenue in Long Beach (Ibid.). Vessels was active in Long Beach civic affairs during the 1930s and into the early 1940s and was often mentioned in the local newspapers. One article noted that he was captain of the Long Beach Honorary Mounted Police Patrol, which was composed of leading businessmen in the city, and another said he was charter vice president of the Oil Field Service Club (*Independent* 1940; *Long Beach Sun* 1940).

In 1945, it was reported that Vessels bought a yearling bull named President Mischief 9th for \$16,750 (over \$270,000 in 2023 dollars), the highest price ever paid for a bull in California (*The Hanford Sentinel* 1945). In 1946, Vessels purchased 435 acres in what would become the city of Cypress. Around that same time, Vessels and Huntley Gordon of Chino, California, “traveled through Texas and Oklahoma buying railroad carloads of good mares. The need for a stallion was solved when Vessels bought *Clabber* for \$5,000 dollars and shipped the “Iron Horse” from Arizona to his ranch in Cypress, California” (American Quarter Horse Association 1989). *Clabber* was named the World’s Champion Quarter Horse by the American Quarter Horse Racing Association in 1941 (Denhardt 1967). During his racing career, he was used as a rope horse and a racehorse and once ran three quarter-mile races in one day and won them each in 23 seconds (Ibid.). This buying spree was the foundation for Vessels Stallion Farm. “Two of the prominent stallions the farm stood were *Clabber* and *Go Man Go*” (American Quarter Horse Association 1989).

Vessels originally used the Cypress land to pasture Hereford cattle and then quarter horses (Chamberlain 2000). In 1947, Vessels built a racetrack on the ranch (*Long Beach Press-Telegram* 1947; Chamberlain 2000). Initially it was used for training and match racing the quarter horses he bred there, but by the spring of that year, Vessels' new racetrack "located two miles west of Stanton on Katella Road near the Los Alamitos Air Station" began to host motorcycle races sanctioned by the American Motorcycle Association (*Long Beach Press-Telegram* 1947). In August 1947, a crowd variously estimated at between one and two thousand showed up to watch the first full card of quarter horse racing, six non-pari-mutuel races (fans could not bet on the horses). Soon the quarter horse races became a weekly event (Chamberlain 2000). At that time, the track was located a little southwest of where it is today in an area between Vessels' home and the railroad tracks (Historicaerials.com var.). The area is now developed with Ovation at Flora Park, a 55+ residential community (Historicaerials.com var.).

Attendance at the quarter horse races was so high that Vessels had to scale back the races to once a month. During this time, it was only legal to bet on thoroughbred horse races and standardbreds (trotters), because the sport generated State tax revenues which were used, among other things, to improve the breeds. In 1948, the State Attorney General ruled that quarter horse racing was legal based on current law, because by then registered quarter horses were a recognized breed. But the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB), which was controlled by the breeders of thoroughbreds, refused to allow betting on quarter horse races (Chamberlain 2000). This prompted the breeders of quarter horses to organize. Vessels founded and became president of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association, an affiliate of the national association, and began lobbying Sacramento for pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horses (Chamberlain 2000; *The Sacramento Bee* 1949). The State Legislature passed a bill allowing the State's six major tracks to include one quarter horse race per day (*The Sacramento Bee* 1949). Bay Meadows (no longer extant) at San Mateo was the first, carding 25 sprints (Chamberlain 2000). Finally, the CHRB agreed to pari-mutuel betting on quarter horse races. "In 1950, California [the California Horse Racing Board] approved pari-mutuel for quarter horses and an 11-day season [at Vessels' track] starting on December 4 of the following year" (American Quarter Horse Association 1989).

In December 1951, the first pari-mutuel all-quarter horse meet was held at Vessels' track with more than 400 sprinters from various states and over 4,100 spectators the first day (Chamberlain 2000). On closing day, more than 7,000 fans showed up (Ibid.). Quarter horse racing was here to stay. In 1952, *Monita* and *Black Easter Bunny* won "divisions of the first Los Alamitos Invitational Championship, then called the California Championship" (Chamberlain 2000).

By 1953, a new track was under construction on Vessel's property northwest of the original track (Historicaerials.com var.). The new track (in the current location) opened in 1954 in time for the Fall meet and soon became the "premier quarter horse track in the country" (Chamberlain 2000; American Quarter Horse Association 1989). In 1955, an addition was made to the clubhouse, and in 1958, Vessels sold stock to build a new grandstand (MacKendrick 2022). In 1959, the track was the second largest industry in Cypress after the Texaco tank farm (*Los Angeles Times* 1959).

Business remained strong and the track entered the 1960s with 55 days of sport, split into spring and fall sessions; attendance was averaging more than 6,000 daily (Ibid.). In 1963, Vessels died suddenly and Frank, Jr. took over. The business continued to prosper with attendance and betting increasing into the late 1960s (Ibid.). During this period (1963–1972), aerial photographs reveal that a number of barns and other buildings were added to the property (Historicaerials.com var.). In July 1968, “one of the finest lighting systems in the country was installed” and Los Alamitos introduced night racing to southern California (Ibid.). A crowd of 16,414, a record for the time, showed up for the first night race (Ibid.). Initially things went well, but by September attendance began to fall and by November the stands were virtually empty.

Changes were made in 1969 to address the issues that had caused the fall-off in attendance the year before. Although the re-scheduling caused the quarter horse races to overlap with the thoroughbred meet at Hollywood Park (no longer extant) for four-and-a-half weeks, the conflict was not fatal (Mackendrick 2022). Los Alamitos closed the 1969 season with “a new record for average attendance – 9,025. And along the way they had introduced two more “firsts” to Southern California – 870-yard races and quinella wagering” (Mackendrick 2022).

The track stayed in the Vessels family until 1984, when it was sold to Hollywood Park (Chamberlain 2000). By 1989, it was under a new ownership group, including Edward Allred, that soon began a series of renovations to the buildings and the track’s interior (*Los Angeles Times* 1991). A 1991 news article stated that from the 1950s to the present (1991), Vessels’ track was the most prominent quarter horse track in the State and only Ruidoso Downs in New Mexico was held in the same esteem by those in the sport (*Los Angeles Times* 1991). In 1998, Allred became the sole owner of the track (Chamberlain 2000). According to Facilities Manager Frank Sherren, Dr. Allred is currently the biggest quarter horse breeder in the country. In 2021, Edward C. Allred was inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame as a Legacy Breeder (American Quarter Horse Association 2022).

In 1962, Frank Vessels, Sr. was named Orange County’s Man of the Year (*Los Angeles Times* 1963). In September 1965, just two years after his death, Frank Vessels, Sr. Elementary School opened in Cypress (*Anaheim Bulletin* 1965). In 1989, Frank Vessels, Sr. was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sport of quarter horse racing in California (American Quarter Horse Association 1989). Several years later (circa 1999), a street in Cypress near the racetrack was named for him (Historicaerials.com var.).

FIELD SURVEY

The field survey included numerous buildings, structures, and features. The Grandstand, Burgart’s, the Clubhouse, and the track are the only historic-period elements of the facility that are of any consequence. The remainder are utilitarian buildings/structures of no particular architectural interest; many are modern.

Grandstand, Burgart’s, and the Clubhouse

Together, the Grandstand, Burgart’s (also called the Annex), and the Clubhouse comprise the largest building on the subject property. The Clubhouse building, which was originally freestanding, appears to be the oldest of the three, dating to 1954 (Historicaerials.com var.). The Grandstand, which replaced wooden bleachers, was constructed between December 1958 and July 1959, but according

to a track brochure its debut was in 1960 (*Press-Telegram* 1959; *Los Angeles Times* 1959; Chamberlain 2000). The Burgart's building or the Annex, between and connecting the grandstands and the Clubhouse, was built by 1963 (Historicaerials.com var.).

The concrete Grandstand is generally rectangular in plan. It has a multi-level roof with the lower (southern) portion being flat and the higher (northern) portion being a low-pitched, tilted gable. There are three rectangular tower elements: one is located at the mid-point of the Grandstand at the junction of the lower and higher roofs near the east end, and the other two, which are slightly recessed, flank the Grandstand at the east and west ends.

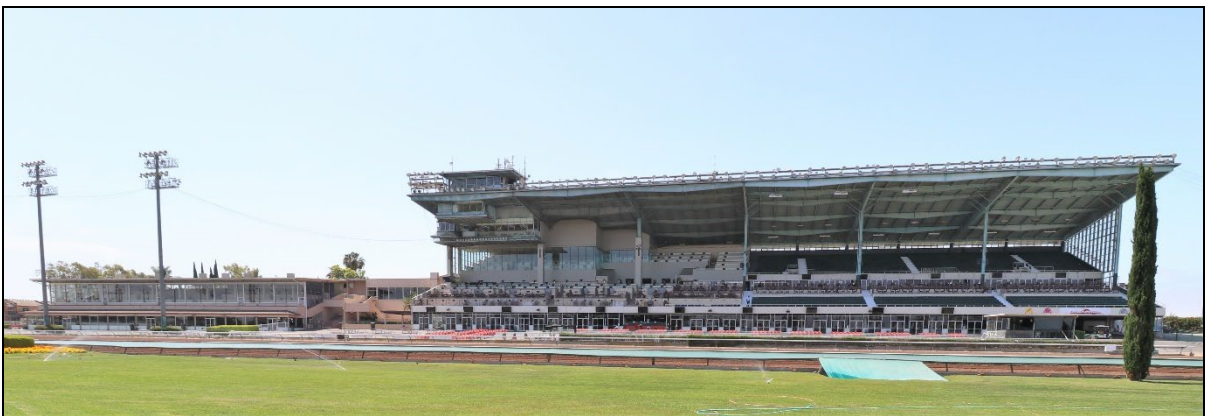
The south elevation, facing the parking lot, has painted concrete walls above ground-level walls clad with flag stone. The upper stories are nearly symmetrical, but the ground level is not. From west to east, the south elevation includes: a large, recessed, rectangular, scored concrete tower with a full-height, narrow pilaster on the west end and a partial height narrow pilaster above the roofline on the east end; a full-height metal beam at the corner of the building; a large deeply recessed area on the ground level divided by three metal beams that support the upper stories and are centered below three vertically-oriented bands of metal-framed, 2 over 14, awning windows (some of which are either painted or are an opaque material); the windows are separated by smooth, painted concrete panels; a stone-clad wall is below the eastern half of the third set of windows and adjacent to a rectangular, full-height wall that projects several feet to the south; and a vertical band of 2 over 14 metal-framed windows is flanked by concrete panels above flag stone ground level walls on the east side of the projecting wall. The primary entrance, which includes several metal-framed glass doors and windows behind four staff booths and a central, rectangular column, is deeply recessed and flanked by flag stone walls. The entrance is accented by a wide, full-height, two-panel, scored concrete wall (currently painted dark green) with a centered shimmering horsehead logo. The remainder of the south elevation east of the main entrance is very similar to the west side of the elevation. On the ground level, it includes stone-clad walls and a gated, recessed area with signs that read "Administration", "Thoroughbred Racing Office", "Thoroughbred Owners of California", and "Executive Offices". East of the gated area, there are two, recessed, vertical-rectangular windows with transoms and stucco surrounds. The upper levels have four, vertically-oriented bands of metal-framed, 2 over 14, awning windows (some of which are either painted or are an opaque material) separated by stucco walls, a tall, rectangular tower element extending from the roof, and a large, recessed, rectangular, scored concrete tower that extends several feet above the roofline. Various roof-mounted equipment is also visible at the eastern end of the building.

At the east end of the Grandstand and set back to the north is Burgart's. This three-story building, previously known as the Annex, was named for a Los Alamitos announcer. It includes a bar, the Cypress Room, and the Finish Line Room. The south elevation is clad with stone on the ground level that matches the Grandstand. The upper levels are covered with stucco and are cantilevered over the ground level. The roof appears to be flat. The top level was an open patio that was enclosed in the 1980s (Sherren 2022). The entrance is recessed and has large, fixed windows and a pair of doors with multi-paned glass and a transom. At least some of the fenestration appears to be modern.

The Clubhouse is adjacent to Burgart's. It is a 1960s-era, wood-framed building with late-1980s fenestration and stucco walls (Sherren 2022). The most distinctive feature is the nearly full-height, angled stone walls that flank the projecting entrance.



Grandstand, south elevation facing the parking lot, view north (June 10, 2022). The Annex/Burgart's is on the east side of the Grandstand (right side of this photograph).



Grandstand, north elevation, view south from the infield (June 10, 2022). Burgart's and the Clubhouse are on the east side of the Grandstand (left side of this photograph). The Jockeys' Room is on the west side of the Grandstand at track level (right side of this photograph).



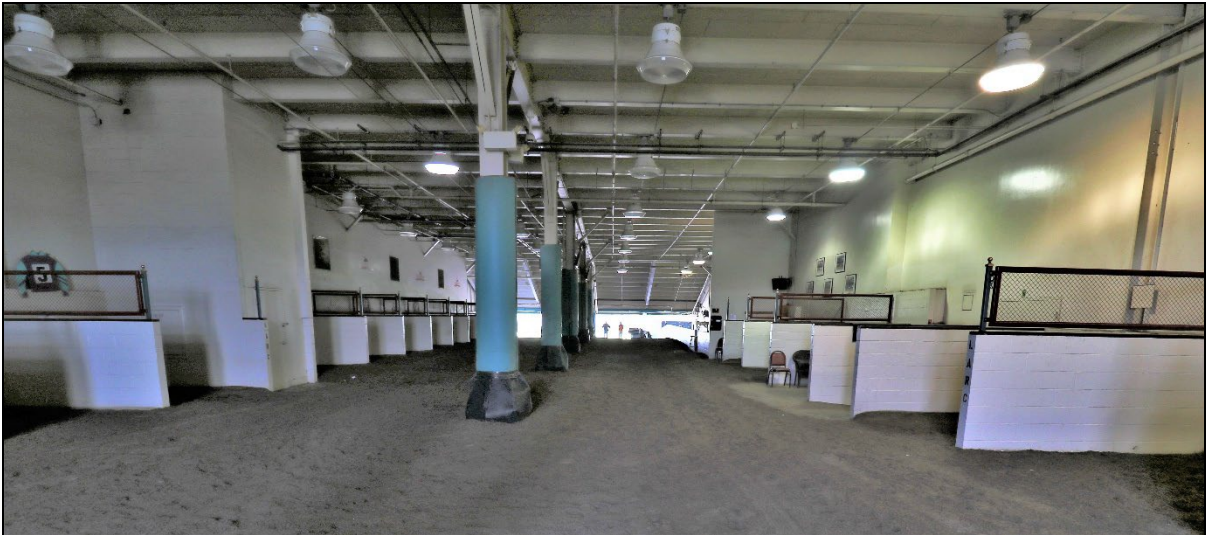
Burgart's, on the east side of the Grandstand. South elevation, view north (June 10, 2022).



Restaurants and offices located east of Burgart's. South elevation, view north (June 10, 2022).



Grandstand/restaurants/offices, east elevation, view west (June 10, 2022).



Jockeys' Room at the west end of the Grandstand building, view north toward track (June 10, 2022).



Grandstand, west and south elevations, view northeast (June 10, 2022).

Racetrack

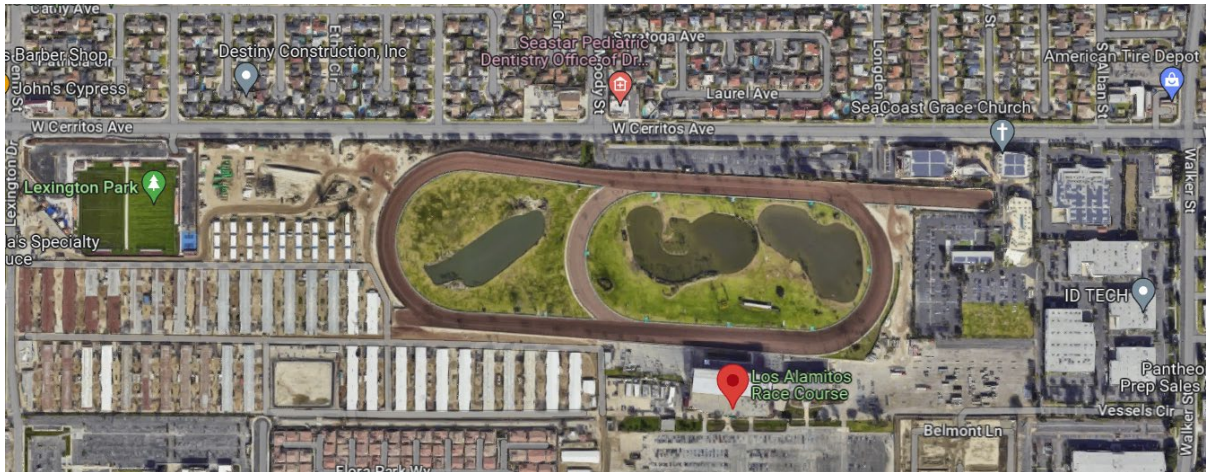
It was not possible to photograph the racetrack in its entirety during the field survey. As previously discussed, the track was moved to this location in the 1950s and was enlarged to accommodate thoroughbreds circa 2013. The aerial photographs below demonstrate changes to the track between 1970, 1990, and 2023. The chute on the south side of the track appears to retain its original location and configuration.



1970 aerial photograph (County of Orange var.).



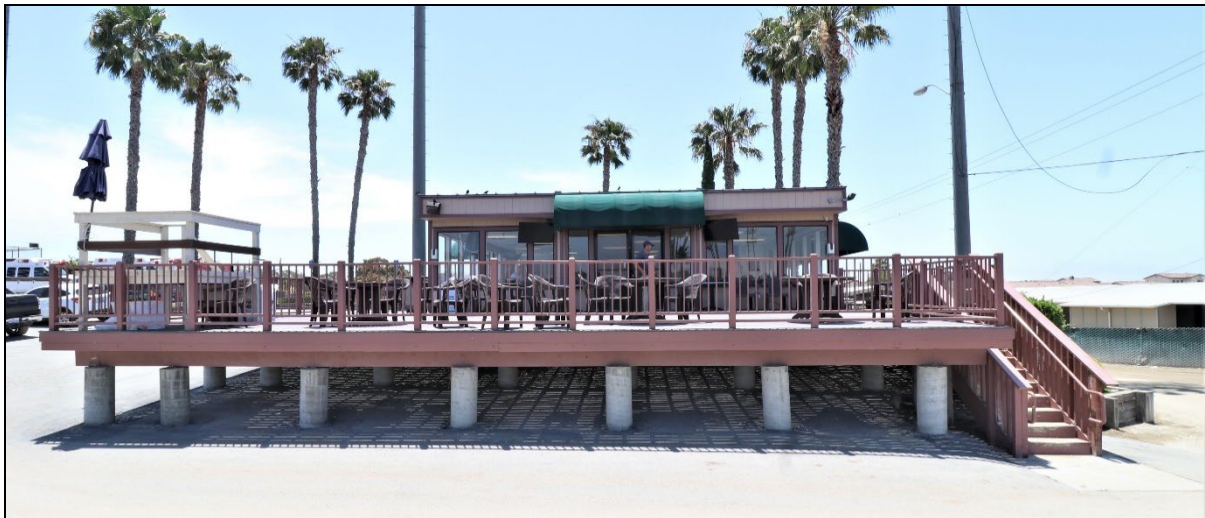
1990 aerial photograph (County of Orange var.). In this photo, the oval appears to be smaller than it was in 1960.



2023 aerial photograph (Google 2023).

Staff Restaurant

This building is 375 feet west of the Grandstand and just east of the barn area. It was built in the 1980s (Sherren 2022; County of Orange var.).



Staff restaurant, north elevation, view south (June 10, 2022).

Barn Area

The barn area dominates the southwest side of the property and extends all the way to Lexington Drive. There are 49 barns and a laundry/restroom facility. All of the barns are rectangular with the east and west elevations being the long sides and the north and south elevations being the narrow ends. Approximately 19 of the barns in the southwest corner of the property, as well as the laundry/restroom facility (located adjacent to Lexington Drive), were built prior to 1970 (County of Orange var.). Many of the barns are modern.



Barn. Typical historic-period barn. North and west elevations, view southeast (June 10, 2022).



Typical historic-period barn end elevation. South elevation, view north (June 10, 2022).



Laundry/restroom facility adjacent to Lexington Drive. East and north elevations, view southwest (June 10, 2022).



Typical modern barn, view southwest (June 10, 2022).



Typical modern barn. North elevation, view south (June 10, 2022).

Other Features

A number of other buildings/structures were observed during the field survey. Some of these are prefabricated and/or modern and all are utilitarian with no particular architectural character.



Modular buildings approximately 50 feet west of the Grandstand, view northwest (June 10, 2022).



Race day barn southwest of the Grandstand and west of the parking lot. South and east elevations, view northwest (June 10, 2022).



Check-in office, view to the east (June 10, 2022).



Modular buildings west of the Grandstand, view northeast (June 10, 2022).



Modular building southwest of the Grandstand and north of the parking lot, view south (June 10, 2022).



Tanks and shed, view southwest (June 10, 2022).



View northwest (June 10, 2022).

SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATION

Based on the research results discussed above, the following sections present the historical significance evaluation for the Los Alamitos Race Course and the conclusion on whether it qualifies as a “historical resource” as defined by CEQA.

DEFINITIONS

CEQA (PRC Chapter 2.6, Section 21083.2 and California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 145, Chapter 3, Article 5, Section 15064.5) calls for the evaluation and recordation of historical resources. The criteria for determining the significance of impacts to historical resources are based on Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines and Guidelines for the Nomination of Properties to the California Register. Properties eligible for listing in the California Register and subject to review under CEQA are those meeting the criteria for listing in the California Register, the National Register, or designation under a local ordinance.

National Register of Historic Places

A cultural resource is evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register according to four criteria. These criteria generally require that the resource be 50 years of age or older and significant at the local, state, or national level according to one or more of the following:

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

Properties that are not 50 years of age or older must have “exceptional significance” in accordance with National Register Criteria Considerations. The National Register also requires that a resource possess integrity, which is defined as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.” The aspects of integrity are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. To determine which of these factors are most important will depend on the particular National Register criterion under which the resource is considered eligible for listing.

California Register of Historical Resources

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

1. It is associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;

2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; and/or
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the Nation.

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, the California Register requires that sufficient time has passed since a resource's period of significance to "obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource." Fifty years is used as a general estimate of time needed to develop the perspective to understand the resource's significance (CCR 4852 [d][2]).

The California Register also requires that a resource possess integrity, which is defined as "the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance" (California Office of Historic Preservation 1999:2). To retain integrity, a resource should have its original location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Which of these factors is most important depends on the particular criterion under which the resource is considered eligible for listing (California Office of Historic Preservation 1999).

EVALUATION

In summary, in 1946 entrepreneur Frank Vessels bought 450 acres in what would become the city of Cypress. He constructed the first racetrack on the ranch. At first, the track was used for training and match racing the quarter horses he bred there, but he also hosted motorcycle races. In August 1947, a crowd of more than 1,000 showed up to watch the first full card of quarter horse racing, six non-pari-mutuel (no betting) races. Soon the quarter horse races were a weekly event. By 1948, quarter horse racing was deemed legal, but the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) refused to allow betting on it. This prompted breeders of quarter horses to organize, and Vessels became the first president of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association. Vessels began lobbying in Sacramento for pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horses. In 1949, the State Legislature allowed six major tracks to include one quarter horse race per day. Finally, the CHRB agreed to pari-mutuel betting on quarter horse races in 1950. In December 1951, the first pari-mutuel all quarter horse meet was held at Vessels' track. Since 1951, Los Alamitos has been the home of four races worth more than \$1 million, including quarter horse racing's only \$2 million guaranteed race - the Los Alamitos Two Million Futurity. Los Alamitos' other million-dollar races are the Golden State Million Futurity, the Ed Burke Million Futurity and the Los Alamitos Super Derby. Los Alamitos is also the home of the prestigious \$750,000 Champion of Champions.

In 1954, the track was moved to its current location although the configuration has changed over the years. By 1959, the track was the second largest industry in Cypress. Vessels died in 1963, but the facility continued to grow and prosper under the leadership of his son Frank, Jr. In 1968, night racing was introduced at the track and in 1969, the track was the first in southern California to have 870-yard races and quinella wagering. The track stayed in the Vessels family until 1984. A 1991 news

article stated that from the 1950s to the present (1991), Vessels' track was the most prominent quarter horse track in the State and only Ruidoso Downs in New Mexico was held in the same esteem by those in the sport. In 1998, Edward Allred became the sole owner of the track (Chamberlain 2000). He was the first to exceed \$20 million in quarter horse earnings and is the sport's all-time leading owner and breeder (California Thoroughbred Breeders Association 2023). In 1999–2000, the State received \$44 million from wagering, including \$7.5 million that went to the State's General Fund. By law, each racing association must conduct a portion of its races for the benefit of charities, including racing-related charities that are approved by the CHRB. Donations to these totaled more than \$1,000,000 in 1999–2000.

In 1989, Frank Vessels, Sr. was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Hall of Fame for his contributions to the industry, and in 2021, Edward C. Allred was inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame as a Legacy Breeder.

The Los Alamitos Race Course is evaluated below for historical significance under the criteria for listing in the National Register and California Register. No local criteria for significance were found.

Criteria A/1. The Los Alamitos Race Course track is significant under National Register Criterion A and California Register Criterion 1 for its association with organized quarter horse racing in California and the related impact on the local economy. The property is home to one of the top quarter horse tracks in the country, the former location of the Vessels' ranch which was a major and important breeder of quarter horses, and home to Frank Vessels, Sr. who played a key role in helping to legalize quarter horse racing and betting in California. The Los Alamitos Race Course is the premier quarter horse racetrack in California. Although the facility has sustained many alterations and modern intrusions, the Grandstand, the 1954 quarter-mile chute, and the pre-1970 track appear to be intact, and the property retains enough integrity to clearly convey its association with quarter horse racing. Therefore, the property is significant under these criteria. The period of significance under these criteria is 1954, when the current track opened, to 1970, which is considered the end of the golden age of horse racing.

Criteria B/2. The Los Alamitos Race Course track is significant under National Register Criterion B and California Register Criterion 2 for its association with Frank Vessels, Sr. The property was owned and operated by Frank Vessels, Sr. from 1946 until his death in 1963. Vessels is associated with the establishment and success of organized quarter horse racing in California. The racetrack was built by Vessels in 1954, replacing an earlier track (1947, no longer extant). Both tracks were built on Vessels' stallion farm, where he bred quarter horses and had two prominent stallions that made a lasting influence on the development of the quarter horse breed. He added a clubhouse in 1955 and a grandstand in 1959, and by 1963 a number of barns had been constructed. Vessels was the founder and President of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association (PCQHA), an affiliate of the National Quarter Horse Association. This group (PCQHA) organized the first registered quarter horse show ever held in Los Angeles (1947). As a representative of that group, Vessels successfully lobbied the State Legislature and the California Horse Racing Board to legalize pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse races, which had a profound impact on the sport of horse racing and the industry of horse breeding in California. By 1959, the Los Alamitos Race Course was the second largest revenue generator in the City of Cypress. In 1962, Frank Vessels, Sr. was named Orange County's Man of the Year. In September 1965, Frank Vessels Sr. Elementary School opened in Cypress. In 1989, Frank

Vessels, Sr. was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sport of quarter horse racing in California. Several years later (circa 1999) a street in Cypress near the racetrack was named for him. Therefore, the property is significant under these criteria. The period of significance is 1954, when the current track opened, to 1963 when Frank Vessels, Sr. died.

Criteria C/3: The Los Alamitos Race Course track is not significant under National Register Criterion C and California Register Criterion 3. The property has sustained several alterations and modern intrusions. While it embodies the characteristics of a property type (horse racing facility), it is not a particularly good or representative example of the type. There is no indication that it is the work of a master architect, designer, or builder and it does not possess high artistic values. Therefore, the property is not significant under these criteria.

Criteria D/4: The Los Alamitos Race Course track is not significant under National Register Criterion D and California Register Criterion 4. All of the buildings/structures, as well as the racetrack, were built in the mid-20th century or later using common methods and materials. Therefore, the resource is not significant under these criteria.

Essential Features: Since 1954, when Vessels built the race track in its current location, a number of changes have occurred. Buildings have been added, the track has been altered, changes have been made to the Grandstand and other buildings, and portions of the property have been sold off and redeveloped. However, the features that are essential to convey the significance of Los Alamitos Race Course under Criteria A/1 and B/2 remain. These are the Grandstand and the oval track with the chute on the south side of it (refer to photographs and aerials in the Historical Background, Field Survey section). These features date to the period of significance (1954–1970), were built by Frank Vessels, Sr., and clearly convey the property's history as a horse racing facility.

Discussion of Integrity: As noted above, the National Register and the California Register require that, in addition to meeting the criteria for significance, a resource must also possess integrity. The following is a discussion of the integrity of the essential features of Los Alamitos Race Course.

Location: Location refers to the place where the historic property was constructed. The Grandstand and the race track retain integrity of location. The chute appears to be in the same location as it has been since 1954, while the location of the smaller oval race track has not changed since 1970. The Grandstand is in its original 1960 location. Integrity of location is high.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the form or plan of the property. As discussed above, the design of the property has sustained some alterations, but the overall layout of the Grandstand and track are substantially the same as they were during the period of significance. More specifically, the chute appears to retain the same basic design it has had since the 1950s. The smaller oval track also appears to retain its general configuration from before 1970, including the two water features in the infield. However, its integrity of design has been somewhat diminished by an addition that created a larger, thoroughbred track to the west. The south and west elevations of the Grandstand retain a high degree of integrity of design and convey a strong association with the period of significance. The north elevation (track side) has sustained some alterations mostly in the form of areas that have been enclosed, but still reads as an older grandstand. Overall, the integrity of design of the essential features is moderate.

Setting: The setting is the physical environment of the property. The setting of the race course has sustained alterations since 1970, primarily in the form of intensified development within and around the race course property. Integrity of setting is low.

Materials: Materials typically refers to the physical elements that were used to construct the features that are part of the property. The Grandstand appears to retain original structural materials (concrete and steel) and at least some original fenestration. However, alterations have resulted in installation of some new materials. The race track and chute have no doubt been resurfaced numerous times throughout their history and do not retain the original materials with which they were constructed. They do still remain dirt tracks and the infield continues to have turf and water features that are consistent with the materials from the period of significance. The overall integrity of materials is moderate.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the craftsmanship that went into development of the physical features of the property during the historic period. The south and west elevations of the Grandstand retain a high degree of integrity of workmanship and convey a strong association with the period of significance. The north elevation (track side) has sustained some alterations, mostly in the form of areas that have been enclosed, but the workmanship that went into the overall form of the building, such as the canopy roof supported by steel columns, is still evident. The workmanship that went into the race track and chute appears to remain, since neither have sustained major alterations to their pre-1970 configuration. Integrity of workmanship is moderate.

Feeling: Feeling is the ability of the property to evoke a sense of stepping back in time. Because they mostly retain their appearance from the historic period, the south and west elevations of the Grandstand and to a lesser extent the north elevation, evoke a feeling of the past. The race track and chute also evoke some feeling of the past, but the feeling has been diminished by the post-1990 extension of the track. Changes to the overall setting of the Race Course has also diminished its ability to convey a sense of feeling from its historical period. Therefore the overall integrity of feeling has been somewhat compromised and is moderate.

Association: Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The race track, chute, and Grandstand were all built by Frank Vessels for the specific purpose of quarter horse racing. Each of these essential features conveys a strong association with both quarter horse racing and Frank Vessels.. Integrity of association is high.

In summary, the essential features of the Los Alamitos Race Course retain high integrity of location and association and moderate integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Only integrity of setting is low. Based on this, the property retains enough integrity to convey its significance under National Register and California Register criteria A/1 and B/2. Los Alamitos Race Course is a “historic property” for the purposes of Section 106 and a “historical resource” for the purposes of CEQA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The foregoing report has provided background information on the Los Alamitos Race Course, outlined the methods used in the current study, and presented the results of the various avenues of research. As a result of these efforts, the Los Alamitos Race Course appears eligible for listing in the National Register and the California Register under Criteria A/1 and B/2. Under Criteria A/1 it is significant for its association with the establishment and success of organized quarter horse racing in California. Under Criteria B/2 it is significant for its association with Frank Vessels, Sr. who played a significant role in developing quarter horse racing in California.

When Frank Vessels established his cattle and horse ranch in Cypress in 1946, quarter horse racing had not yet been ruled legal in California. In fact, the breed had only been officially named in 1940 when the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) was established. At that time, most of the important and influential breeders were located in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado. To jump start quarter horse breeding at his Cypress ranch, Vessels traveled through Texas and Oklahoma buying mares and the famous stallion *Clabber*. *Clabber*, also known as the Iron Horse, was named the World's Champion Quarter Horse by the AQHA in 1941. He sired numerous winners and was eventually inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame. Later (1960), Vessels acquired *Go Man Go* as a breeding stallion. *Go Man Go* had an illustrious racing career, sired numerous winners, and was inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame. The status of these horses helped solidify Vessels' importance as a breeder.

In 1947, Vessels built a racetrack at his ranch. Initially it was used for vehicle racing, but in August 1947, a crowd of a thousand or more people showed up to watch the first full card of quarter horse racing, six non-pari-mutuel races (fans could not bet on the horses). The races soon became a weekly event, but attendance was so high that Vessels scaled back to monthly races. At this time, it was only legal to bet on thoroughbred horse races and standardbreds (trotters). In 1948, the State Attorney General ruled that quarter horse racing was legal in California because registered quarter horses were a recognized breed. However, the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB), which was made up of breeders of thoroughbreds, refused to allow betting on quarter horse races. This prompted the breeders of quarter horses to organize. Vessels founded and became president of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association (PCQHA), a position he held for several years. On behalf of PCQHA, an affiliate of the AQHA, Vessels began lobbying Sacramento for pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse racing.

Pari-mutuel wagering plays an important, but perhaps little known role in the improvement of California's agriculture industries. California has long been a leader in agriculture. This dominance is, in part, a result of a complex system that was specifically established to improve and protect all manner of agriculture and to facilitate implementation of advancements through communication and education. This system includes numerous institutions and organizations including the University of California, the county fair system, district agricultural groups, and organizations like the CHRB. Betting is important because it generates funds to support these endeavors and contributes to the State's General Fund. In addition, by law a portion of the races must benefit charities, including CHRB approved racing charities.

Vessels was successful in his lobbying efforts on behalf of the PCQHA. Pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse races was approved by the State Legislature in 1949 and, in 1950, the CHRB approved pari-mutuel betting and an 11-day season at Vessels' track starting in December 1951. Since 1951, Los Alamitos has been the home of four races worth over \$1 million dollars, including quarter horse racing's only \$2 million guaranteed race - the Los Alamitos Two Million Futurity. By 1953, a new track (in the current location) was under construction at Vessels' ranch; it opened in time for the 1954 Fall meet. The track prospered throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The period of significance for Los Alamitos Race Course is 1954 to 1970. The period of significance is the time when the historic events occurred that contribute to the significance of the property. In this case, 1954 is when the track was built at the current location and 1970 is the end of the golden age of horse racing. Although Los Alamitos Race Course has sustained alterations to most, if not all, of its buildings and features, including the oval racetrack, it retains enough integrity to convey an association with its period of significance. All of the major features remain, including the grandstand, barns, clubhouse, and, of course, the race track itself.

The Los Alamitos Race Course is a "historical resource" for the purposes of CEQA. CEQA establishes that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (Public Resources Code [PRC] §21084.1). "Substantial adverse change," according to PRC Section 5020.1(q), "means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired." It is LSA's understanding that, because the Los Alamitos Race Course has been identified as a potential opportunity site for housing, it may be partially or completely demolished. Currently, the proposed project is a programmatic update to the City's General Plan, Lincoln Avenue Specific Plan, Cypress Town Center and Commons Specific Plan 2.0, Cypress Business and Professional Center Specific Plan, and Zoning Ordinance and would not directly result in physical development. Consequently, the specific location and configuration of future development at the Race Course site has not yet been determined and is not under consideration as part the programmatic update.

Should the Los Alamitos Race Course be demolished, it would constitute a significant unavoidable impact to historical resources that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. LSA recommends that, if a specific project is proposed that does not involve full demolition, an impacts assessment be prepared using the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. If appropriate, mitigation measures may be recommended at that time.

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APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION (DPR) 523 FORMS

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

Primary # _____
 HRI # _____
 Trinomial _____
 NRHP Status Code 3S/3CS

Other Listings _____
 Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 8 Resource Name or #: Los Alamitos Race Course

P1. Other Identifier: 4961 Katella Avenue

***P2. Location:** Not for Publication Unrestricted ***a. County:** _____ and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** Los Alamitos, CA **Date:** 1981 **T4S; R11W; Sections:** 20, 21, 28, and 29; S.B.B.M.
c. Address: 4961 Katella Avenue **City:** Cypress **Zip:** 90720
d. UTM: Zone: 11; _____ mE/ _____ mN (G.P.S.)
e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate): APNs 241-081-02, 241-221-24, and 241-221-33. Between Katella Avenue and Cerritos Avenue east of Lexington Drive.

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)
 The subject property is approximately 125 acres in size and is currently developed with the Los Alamitos Race Course, including the track, grandstands, barns/stables, offices, parking lots, and other built environment features. Many of the buildings are modern and/or modular structures. Aside from the Grandstand, Burgart's, and the Clubhouse, the buildings/structures are of no particular architectural interest.

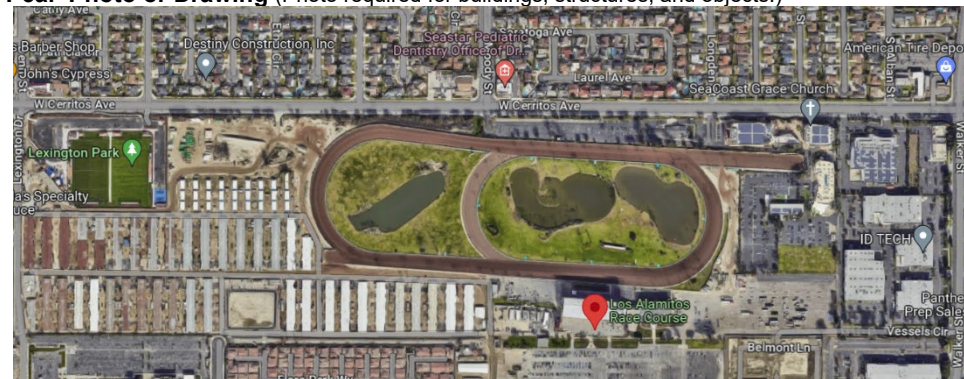
Together, the Grandstand, Burgart's (also called the Annex), and the Clubhouse comprise the largest building on the property. The Clubhouse building, which was originally freestanding, appears to be the oldest of the three, dating to 1954 (Historicaerials.com var.). The Grandstand, which replaced wooden bleachers, was constructed between December 1958 and July 1959, but according to a track brochure, its debut was in 1960 (*Press-Telegram* 1959; *Los Angeles Times* 1959; Chamberlain 2000). The Burgart's building or the Annex, between and connecting the grandstands and the Clubhouse, was built by 1963 (Historicaerials.com var.).

The concrete Grandstand is generally rectangular in plan. It has a multi-level roof with the lower (southern) portion being flat and the higher (northern) portion being a low-pitched, tilted gable. There are three rectangular tower elements: one is at the mid-point of the Grandstand at the junction of the lower and higher roofs near the east end and the other two, which are slightly recessed, flank the Grandstand at the east and west ends. (See Continuation Sheet)

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP39-Other (horse racing facility)

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

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



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) Top: 2023 aerial photograph of Los Alamitos Race Course (Google 2023); Bottom: Grandstand, view north (6/10/22).

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic Prehistoric Both
 1954 (Chamberlain 2000)

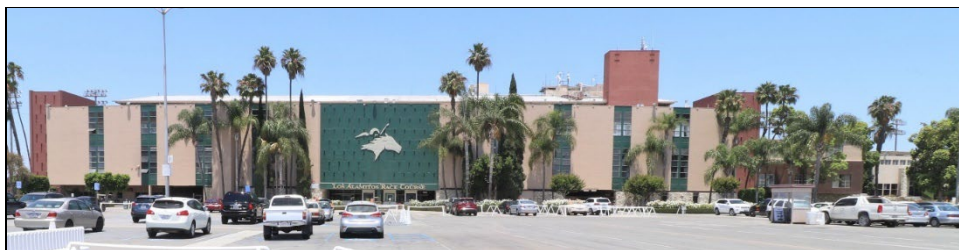
***P7. Owner and Address:**

Edward Allred
 4961 Katella Avenue
 Cypress, CA 90720

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

***P9. Date Recorded:**
 June 10, 2022

***P10. Survey Type:** (Describe)
 Intensive-level Section 106 and CEQA compliance



(See Continuation Sheet)

***P11. Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") Historic Resources Assessment, Cypress Housing Element Implementation, City of Cypress, Orange County, California. 2023. Prepared by LSA.

***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

Page 2 of 8

*NRHP Status Code 3S/3CS

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Los Alamitos Race Course

B1. Historic Name: _____

B2. Common Name: _____

B3. Original Use: Horse racing facility B4. Present Use: Horse racing facility

*B5. Architectural Style: NA

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
The construction history is based on the following sources: Chamberlain 2000; Historicaerials.com var.; County of Orange var.; and Sherren 2022. The racetrack was built by Frank Vessels, Sr. in 1954, replacing an earlier track (1947, no longer extant). Both tracks were built on Vessels' stallion farm, where he bred quarter horses. He added a clubhouse in 1955 and a grandstand in 1959 (opened in 1960). In 1963, the building that is now called Burgart's was built between the Grandstand and the Clubhouse. In 1968, a lighting system was installed to facilitate night racing. By 1970, 19 of the 49 existing barns, as well as the restroom/laundry building in the barn area, had been built and the track oval had been reduced in size. In the 1980s, the staff restaurant was built, the rooftop patio of Burgart's was enclosed, and new fenestration was installed in the Clubhouse building. Circa 2013, the track was changed again to include a larger oval to accommodate thoroughbred racing.

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

*B8. Related Features: Related features include, but are not limited to parking lots, barns, offices, jockeys' room, tunnel, staff restaurant, check-in office, restroom/laundry facilities, and water tanks.

B9a. Architect: None b. Builder: None found

*B10. Significance: Theme: Quarter Horse Racing Area: State of California

Period of Significance: 1954-1970 Property Type: Horse racing facility Applicable Criteria: A and B
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

The Los Alamitos Race Course appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) under Criteria A and B at the State level and also for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) under Criteria 1 and 2 at the State level. Under Criteria A/1 it is significant for its association with the establishment and success of organized quarter horse racing in California. The period of significance under Criteria A/1 is 1954, when the track was built at the current location, to 1970, which is the end of the golden age of horse racing. It is significant under Criteria B/2 for its association with Frank Vessels, Sr. The period of significance under Criteria B/2 is 1954 to 1963 when Frank Vessels, Sr. died. Los Alamitos Race Course is a "historical resource" for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The racetrack was built by Frank Vessels, Sr. in 1954, replacing an earlier track (1947, no longer extant). Both tracks were built on Vessels' stallion farm, where he bred quarter horses and had two prominent stallions (*Clabber* and *Go Man Go*) that had a lasting influence on the development of the quarter horse breed both as racers and sires. He added a clubhouse in 1955 and a Grandstand in 1959, and by 1963 a number of barns had been constructed. Vessels was the founder and President of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association (PCQHA), an affiliate of the National Quarter Horse Association. The PCQHA organized the first registered quarter horse show held in Los Angeles (1947) and Vessels went on to successfully lobby the State Legislature and the California Horse Racing Board to legalize pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse races. The pari-mutuel pool is the primary source of funds for all sectors of the horse racing industry and therefore legalization of pari-mutuel betting on quarter horses had a profound impact on the sport of horse racing and the industry of horse breeding in California. By 1959, the Los Alamitos Race Course was the second largest revenue generator in Cypress. Frank Vessels, Sr. was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Association Hall of Fame in 1989 for his contributions to the sport of quarter horse racing in California. Los Alamitos Race Course is the home of four races worth more than \$1 million dollars, including quarter horse racing's only \$2 million guaranteed race - the Los Alamitos Two Million Futurity. The golden age of horse racing came to an end around 1970, when attendance declined due to off track betting and competition from other forms of entertainment.

For a detailed historic context, refer to the related report (see P11 on page 1). See the Continuation Sheets below for the evaluations under the National Register and California Register criteria.

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

*B12. References: *See Continuation Sheet*

B13. Remarks:

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

*Date of Evaluation: August 2023

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

See Location Map

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

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____

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*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. *Date: August 2023 Continuation Update

P3a. Description (continued from page 1)

The south elevation, facing the parking lot, has painted concrete walls above ground-level walls clad with flagstone. The upper stories are nearly symmetrical, but the ground level is not. From west to east, the south elevation includes a large, recessed, rectangular, scored concrete tower with a full-height, narrow pilaster on the west end and a partial height narrow pilaster above the roofline on the east end; a full-height metal beam at the corner of the building; a large, deeply recessed area on the ground level divided by three metal beams that support the upper stories and are centered below three vertically-oriented bands of metal-framed, 2 over 14, awning windows (some of which are either painted or are an opaque material); the windows are separated by smooth, painted concrete panels; a stone-clad wall is below the eastern half of the third set of windows and adjacent to a rectangular, full-height wall that projects several feet to the south; and a vertical band of 2 over 14 metal-framed windows is flanked by concrete panels above flagstone, ground level walls on the east side of the projecting wall. The primary entrance, which includes several metal-framed glass doors and windows behind four staff booths and a central, rectangular column, is deeply recessed and flanked by flag stone walls. The entrance is accented by a wide, full-height, two-panel, scored concrete wall (currently painted dark green) with a centered shimmering horsehead logo. The remainder of the south elevation east of the main entrance is very similar to the west side of the elevation. On the ground level it includes stone-clad walls, a gated, recessed area with signs that read "Administration", "Thoroughbred Racing Office", "Thoroughbred Owners of California", and "Executive Offices". East of the gated area there are two, recessed, vertical-rectangular windows with transoms and stucco surrounds. The upper levels have four, vertically-oriented bands of metal-framed, 2 over 14, awning windows (some of which are either painted or are an opaque material) separated by stucco walls, a tall, rectangular tower element extending from the roof, and a large, recessed, rectangular, scored concrete tower that extends several feet above the roofline. Various roof-mounted equipment is also visible at the eastern end of the building.

At the east end of the Grandstand, and set back to the north is Burgart's. This three-story building, previously known as the Annex, was named for a Los Alamitos announcer. It includes a bar, the Cypress Room, and the Finish Line Room. The south elevation is clad with stone on the ground level that matches the Grandstand. The upper levels are covered with stucco and are cantilevered over the ground level. The roof appears to be flat. The top level was an open patio that was enclosed in the 1980s (Sherren 2022). The entrance is recessed and has large, fixed windows and a pair of doors with multi-paned glass and a transom. At least some of the fenestration appears to be modern.

The Clubhouse is adjacent to Burgart's. It is a 1960s-era, wood-framed building with late-1980s fenestration and stucco walls (Sherren 2022). The most distinctive feature is the nearly full-height, angled stone walls that flank the projecting entrance.

P5a. Photo (continued from page 1)



Grandstand, north elevation, view south from the infield (June 10, 2022). Burgart's and the Clubhouse are on the east side of the Grandstand (left side of this photograph). The Jockeys' Room is on the west side of the Grandstand at track level (right side of this photograph).

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

Primary # _____
 HRI # _____
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 *Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. *Date: August 2023 Continuation Update

P5a. Photo (continued from page 3)



Burgart's, located on the east side of the Grandstand. South elevation, view north (June 10, 2022).



Restaurants and offices east of Burgart's. South elevation, view north (June 10, 2022).



Grandstand/restaurants/offices, east elevation, view west (June 10, 2022).

For additional photographs, refer to the related report (see P11 on page 1).

***B10. Significance:** (continued from page 2)
 The Los Alamitos Race Course is evaluated below for historical significance under the criteria for listing in the National Register and the California Register. No local criteria for significance were found.

National Register Criterion A - It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

California Register Criterion 1 - It is associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

The Los Alamitos Race Course track is significant under National Register Criterion A and California Register Criterion 1 for its association with organized quarter horse racing in California and the related impact on the local economy. The property is home to one of the top quarter horse tracks in the country, the former location of the Vessels' ranch, which was a major and important breeder of quarter horses, and home to Frank Vessels Sr., who played a key role in helping to legalize quarter horse racing and betting in California. Los Alamitos Race Course is the premier quarter horse racetrack in California. Although the facility has sustained many alterations and modern intrusions, the Grandstand, the 1954 quarter-mile chute and the pre-1970 track appear to be intact, and the property retains enough integrity to clearly convey its association with quarter horse racing. The property is significant under these criteria. The period of significance for these criteria is 1954 to 1970.

(See Continuation Sheet)



Grandstand, west and south elevations, view northeast (June 10, 2022).

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

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____

Page 5 of 8 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Los Alamitos Race Course
*Recorded by LSA Associates, Inc. *Date: August 2023 Continuation Update

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

National Register Criterion B - It is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

California Register Criterion 2 - It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

Los Alamitos Race Course track is significant under National Register Criterion B and California Register Criterion 2 for its association with Frank Vessels, Sr. The property was owned and operated by Frank Vessels, Sr. from 1946 until his death in 1963. Vessels is associated with the establishment and success of organized quarter horse racing in California. Vessels built the racetrack in 1954, replacing an earlier track (1947, no longer extant). Both tracks were built on Vessels' stallion farm, where he bred quarter horses and had two prominent stallions that made a lasting influence on the development of the quarter horse breed. He added a clubhouse in 1955 and a grandstand in 1959, and by 1963 a number of barns had been constructed. Vessels was the founder and President of the Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association, an affiliate of the National Quarter Horse Association. This group organized the first registered quarter horse show ever held in Los Angeles (1947) and went on to successfully lobby the State Legislature and the California Horse Racing Board to legalize pari-mutuel wagering on quarter horse races, which had a profound impact on the sport of horse racing and the industry of horse breeding in California. By 1959, Los Alamitos Race Course was the second largest revenue generator in Cypress. Frank Vessels, Sr. was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Association Hall of Fame (1989). The property is significant under these criteria. The period of significance for these criteria is 1954 to 1963.

National Register Criterion C - It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

California Register Criterion 3 - It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.

The property has sustained several alterations and modern intrusions. While it embodies the characteristics of a property type (horse racing facility), it is not a particularly good or representative example of the type. There is no indication that it is the work of a master architect, designer, or builder and it does not possess high artistic values. The property is not significant under these criteria.

National Register Criterion D - It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.

California Register Criterion 4 - It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the Nation.

All of the buildings/structures, as well as the racetrack, were built in the mid-20th century or later using common methods and materials. The resource is not significant under these criteria.

Essential Features: Since 1954 when Vessels built the race track in its current location, a number of changes have taken place. Buildings have been added, the track has been altered, changes have been made to the Grandstand and other buildings, and portions of the property have been sold off and redeveloped. However, the features that are essential to convey the significance of Los Alamitos Race Course under Criteria A/1 and B/2 remain. These are the Grandstand and the oval track with the chute on the south side of it (refer to photographs and aerials in the Historical Background, Field Survey section). These features date to the period of significance (1954-1970), were built by Frank Vessels', Sr., and clearly convey the property's history as a horse racing facility.

Discussion of Integrity. The National Register and the California Register require that a resource possess integrity, which is defined as "the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance" (California Office of Historic Preservation 1999:2). To retain integrity, a resource should have its original location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Which of these factors is most important depends on the particular criterion under which the resource is considered eligible for listing (California Office of Historic Preservation 1999). . Following is a discussion of the integrity of the essential features of Los Alamitos Race Course.

Location. Location refers to the place where the historic property was constructed. The Grandstand and the race track retain integrity of location. The chute appears to be in the same location as it has been since 1954, while the location of the smaller oval race track has not changed since 1970. The Grandstand is in its original 1960 location. Integrity of location is high.

Design. Design is the combination of elements that create the form or plan of the property. As discussed above, the design of the property has sustained some alterations, but the overall layout of the Grandstand and track (*see Continuation Sheet*)

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

is substantially the same as it was during the period of significance. More specifically, the chute appears to retain the same basic design it has had since the 1950s and has high integrity of design. The smaller oval track also appears to retain its general configuration from before 1970, including the two water features in the infield. However, its integrity of design has been somewhat diminished by an addition that created a larger, thoroughbred track to the west. The south and west elevations of the Grandstand retain a high degree of integrity of design and convey a strong association with the period of significance. The north elevation (track side) has sustained some alterations mostly in the form of areas that have been enclosed, but still reads as an older grandstand. Overall, the integrity of design of the essential features is moderate.

Setting. The setting is the physical environment of the property. The setting of the race course has sustained alterations since 1970 primarily in the form of intensified development within and around the race course property. Integrity of setting is low.

Materials. Materials typically refers to the physical elements that were used to construct the features that are part of the property. The Grandstand appears to retain original structural materials (concrete and steel) and at least some original fenestration. However, alterations have resulted in installation of some new materials. The race track and chute have no doubt been resurfaced numerous times throughout their history and do not retain the original materials with which they were constructed. They do still remain dirt tracks and the infield continues to have turf and water features that are consistent with the materials from the period of significance. The overall integrity of materials is moderate.

Workmanship. Workmanship is the craftsmanship that went into development of the physical features of the property during the historic period. The south and west elevations of the Grandstand retain a high degree of integrity of workmanship and convey a strong association with the period of significance. The north elevation (track side) has sustained some alterations mostly in the form of areas that have been enclosed, but the workmanship that went into the overall form of the building, such as the canopy roof supported by steel columns is still evident. The workmanship that went into the race track and chute appears to remain since neither have sustained major alterations to their pre-1970 configuration. Integrity of workmanship is moderate.

Feeling. Feeling is the ability of the property to evoke a sense of stepping back in time. Because they mostly retain their appearance from the historic period, the south and west elevations of the Grandstand and to a lesser extent the north elevation, evoke a feeling of the past. The race track and chute also evoke some feeling of the past, but the feeling has been diminished by the post-1990 extension of the track. Changes to the overall setting of the Race Course has also diminished its ability to convey a sense of feeling from its historical period. Therefore, the overall integrity of feeling has been compromised and is moderate.

Association. Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The race track, chute, and Grandstand were all built by Frank Vessels for the specific purpose of quarter horse racing. Each of these essential features conveys a strong association with both quarter horse racing and Frank Vessels. Integrity of association is high.

In summary, the essential features of the Los Alamitos Race Course retain high integrity of location and association and moderate integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Only integrity of setting is low. Based on this, the property retains enough integrity to convey its significance under National Register and California Register criteria A/1 and B/2. Los Alamitos Race Course is a "historic property" for the purposes of Section 106 and a "historical resource" for the purposes of CEQA.

B12. References (continued from page 2)

California Office of Historic Preservation

1999 California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register), OHP Technical Assistance Series #6.

Chamberlain, Richard

2000 Los Alamitos Race Course 50 Years of Racing 1951–2000. Brochure provided by Facilities Manager, Frank Sherran in June 2022.

County of Orange

Var. Aerial Imagery. Accessed online in June 2022 and August 2023 at: <https://www.ocgis.com/ocpw/historicalimagery/Historicaerials.com>

Var. Historic aerial photographs of the Los Alamitos Race Course property accessed online in July 2022 and August 2023 at: <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>

(See Continuation Sheet)

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B12. References (continued from page 6)

Los Angeles Times

1959 Race Track Admission Tax Studied. June 14. p. 197.

Long Beach Press-Telegram

1959 Gate, Betting Marks Fall. May 7. P. 46.

Sherren, Frank

2022 Personal communication with Mr. Sherren, Facilities Manager, during the field survey on June 10, 2022.

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LOCATION MAP

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