

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

DRAFT

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Covina Bowl

Other names/site number: Brunswick Zone Covina Bowl

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 1060 West San Bernardino Road

City or town: Covina State: CA County: Los Angeles

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u>meets</u> <u>does not meet</u> the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>_____ Title :</p> <p style="text-align: center;">State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public—Local
- Public—State
- Public—Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Googie

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE, GLASS, STONE: Sandstone,
METAL: Steel, STUCCO

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

Constructed in 1955 with a major addition in 1962, Covina Bowl consists of a sprawling Googie style, Egyptian-themed bowling center surrounded by abundant parking between two streets in the suburban city of Covina, 18 miles east of Los Angeles. The architectural firm of Powers, Daly and DeRosa designed the building. Rectangular in plan with a flat roof, the building is of steel frame construction with tilt-up precast concrete walls. Its Egyptian theme is expressed via a prominent pyramid shaped entrance and soaring reverse triangular neon sign designed for the building's postwar suburban auto-oriented setting. Covina Bowl's Googie elements include the auto-centric design, pyramidal entrance, prominent neon sign, exaggerated folded plate canopy/porte cochere, natural rock piers and accent walls, and plate glass windows that bring the landscaped outdoors in. The building's highly significant exterior retains a remarkable level of physical integrity despite alterations to the main entrance due to the expansion of the former cocktail lounge/showroom. On the interior, the overall plan of the building and general location of the various functions is similar to its mid-1960s configuration, including the 50 bowling lanes. However, the original mid-century seating, scoring tables, and ball returns have been replaced with contemporary equipment, and the lobby area, children's nursery, various entertainment, meeting and community rooms have been completely remodeled. These alterations do not compromise the integrity of Covina Bowl as a whole, which retains its historic exterior appearance and sufficient physical materials, design features, and aspects of construction from its 1955-1962 period of significance.

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Narrative Description

Covina is a small city in Los Angeles County, California approximately 22 miles east of downtown Los Angeles in an area known as the East San Gabriel Valley. Covina is often confused with West Covina, which is located west and south of Covina and is larger in both size and population. West of Covina are the cities of Irwindale and Baldwin Park. Azusa and Glendora are to the north, San Dimas is to the east, and the city of Pomona to the southeast.

Covina Bowl is of steel frame construction with vertically scored, precast concrete panel walls. Rectangular in plan and capped by a flat roof, the 47,821 square foot building is located on a large parcel between West San Bernardino Road on the north and Badillo Street on the south. Its primary (east) elevation faces North Rimsdale Avenue. Original plans prepared by the architects document that when initially completed, Covina Bowl boasted 30 bowling lanes, billiard room, game room, locker room, equipment sales and rental room, restaurant, cocktail lounge, banquet and meeting rooms, and a children's nursery (**Figures 1 and 2**).¹ A beauty parlor was added soon after. The building was surrounded on three sides by a parking lot designed for 200 cars. In 1962, original plans and building permits document a 21,800 square foot addition at the south end of the original building that added 20 more bowling lanes and several retail shops at a cost of approximately \$200,000 (**Figures 3 and 4**).² The 1962 plans identify the building's original architects—Powers, Daly and DeRosa—as the designers of the addition. The property is now called Brunswick Zone Covina Bowl.

The building's architectural motif is based on an Egyptian theme. Hence, its most striking architectural element is the enormous A-frame "pyramid" marking the main entrance (**Figure 5**). The pyramid consists of a steel frame covered in wood with a gunite finish. A combination pedestrian canopy and porte cochere leads from the sidewalk to the pyramid with its glazed single door entrance. The canopy's folded plate design mirrors the sharp angles of the pyramid. A trio of offset Bouquet Canyon Rock piers supports the canopy roof.³ Bouquet Canyon Rock is employed extensively throughout the building—exterior and interior—as a pleasing textural contrast with the straight lines of the modern building. Remarkably, it appears that none of the original natural rock has been covered by paint.

Above the entrance canopy within the pyramid, metal framed glazing fills the top portion of the triangular space. To the right of the entrance beneath the pyramid, a non-original eight-foot high curved concrete wall clad in an inexplicably Mayan Revival pattern curves toward the entry door into the lobby, cutting into a portion of the folded plate canopy. Historic photographs and visual

¹ Original 1955 plans and elevations are located in archival storage at the Community Development Department, City of Covina.

² Original 1962 plans and elevations for the addition are located in archival storage at the Community Development Department, City of Covina.

³ The original 1955 plans specify "Bouquet Canyon Rock" a type of rock found in the Bouquet Canyon quarry in Los Angeles County, California.

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inspection suggest that this curved wall was constructed in the 1970s to enclose an expansion of the Pyramid Room cocktail lounge.

In advertising Covina Bowl to motorists speeding along West San Bernardino Road a truly monumental sign was erected (**Figure 6**). In expressing the pyramidal architectural theme of the main entrance, two intersecting steel posts form the top and bottom triangles of the 60-foot tall sign. Straddling a natural rock pier, the sign's legs penetrate the folded plate entrance canopy through square cutouts. The lower triangle displays the address number "1060" in rear lit plastic; the upper triangle features a rear lit "C" (for Covina) in a stylized Googie typeface attached to a ribbed metal background over a metal mesh screen. Originally, this see-through mesh screen held the name "Covina" in neon script on both sides of the sign. Evidence suggests that "Covina" was replaced with the current stylized "C" sometime in the late 1960s or 1970s. Four rectangles project from the east side of the sign, one for each of the neon letters "B O W L" also in a Googie typeface.

Key to the architect's original design were the numerous ground level planters for subtropical landscaping elements common in the mid-1950s. Today, most of those planting areas—many with large accent boulders—remain. For example, at the base of the monumental sign's rock piers is subtropical landscaping growing from planters that photographs confirm are original to the 1955 design.

A separate exterior coffee shop entrance north of the main entrance is marked by a row of thick triangular concrete baffles that project from the façade, mimicking the building's trademark pyramid roof. Originally there were windows between the baffles; thin strips of rough textured masonry have since filled in these areas. The coffee shop entrance also leads to the Egyptian Room and Pyramid Room.

In 1962, due to the resounding success of the enterprise, 20 more lanes were added to the south end of the building for a total of 50 lanes. At the same time, glazed storefronts were constructed on the addition's east and south elevations with Bouquet Canyon Rock flanking both ends of the new façade. Sheltering the storefronts is a flat roofed precast concrete canopy with triangular arches that wraps around to the south elevation where a new side entrance is located. Radio Shack occupies the largest of the three retail spaces.

The north elevation is where the original recessed secondary entrance is located. It is marked by a flat, cantilevered canopy punctuated by a row of square cutouts that provide light to the planter area below. A tall Mexican Fan Palm penetrates one of the cutouts. To the right of this entrance is a wide expanse of Bouquet Canyon Rock that leads to a recessed landscaped courtyard within which are glazed entrances to the beauty parlor, Garden Room, and conference rooms. The rear, west elevation is without fenestration and entirely utilitarian in design because it abuts the parcel's property line.

Marking the main entrance is a folded plate canopy that leads to the giant pyramid roof. Beneath the pyramid to the left is a non-original wrought iron security fence that prevents access to

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planting areas. The building's main entrance is a metal-framed entry door surrounded by glazing. When entering, one passes a non-original Mayan Revival style concrete wall that curves through the glazing into the lobby. A non-original snack bar continues where the curved wall ends. As noted, the curved wall marks the expansion of the Pyramid Room into the entrance lobby. Remarkably, the top half of the interior portion of the pyramid is still visible above the flat roof of the expanded Pyramid Room.

The entry hall leads directly to the extraordinary 50-lane bowling alley that commands immediate attention and is notable for the complete absence of support posts. As with most remaining bowling centers in Southern California, the original scoring tables, ball returns, scoring screens, bowler seating, and viewer seating have been replaced with up-to-date versions. At night, black light bowling (with music by local DJs) substitutes for the bright lighting that once flooded the bowling center. Sound-reducing acoustical tiles continue to cover the ceiling.

A long north-south concourse boasting a terrazzo floor bisects the building accessed by the perpendicular entrance lobby. Secondary entrances are at the concourse's north and south ends. An original architectural element that adds visual interest to the concourse is a lowered soffit with wood slats and hidden lighting. This element appears again at the coffee shop's concourse entrance. The west side of the concourse features the 50-lane bowling alley with its rows of spectator seating and tables for viewing or snacks. A non-original ADA-compliant mechanical lift is at the alley's north end. Along the east side of the concourse south of the main entrance one finds, in sequential order, the elongated customer counter, the billiard room, game room, small cocktail bar, restrooms, lockers, and pro shop. Behind the customer counter is a large non-original office space with glazed walls on three sides, including two that look into the billiard room.

The portion of the concourse north of the main entrance has vintage-looking Brunswick lockers along both walls lit by original hourglass-shaped sconces. Adjacent to these lockers on the west side of the concourse is a short passage with entrances to the Garden Room, Conference Room, and Board Room. At the end of this passage a non-original wall with door marks the entrance to the Conference and Board Rooms. All of these meeting rooms feature floor to ceiling windows that look onto the recessed courtyard at the north end of the building.

Also at the concourse's north end (opposite the Garden Room passageway) is the interior entrance to the coffee shop flanked by walls of Bouquet Canyon Rock cladding. This entrance is marked by an original low soffit with wood slats similar to that near the center of the concourse. The coffee shop can also be accessed from the exterior of the primary east elevation. The coffee shop counter area is remarkably original with its long Formica counter with cantilevered stools, service area with stainless steel pie cases, semi-exhibition kitchen, and a period clock. Opposite the counter is a large dining area of tuck-and-roll vinyl booths beneath a low soffit. Original plans confirm that this dining area (not the counter and service area) was remodeled, perhaps in the 1980s. Alterations include faux Tiffany hanging lamps, red ochre paver tile floor, turned spindle wood dividers, and decorative arched walls with perforated wood screens and veined smoky mirrors.

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Hanging signs in the coffee shop point to the Pyramid and Egyptian rooms. The Egyptian Room sign is particularly noteworthy because it depicts, in hammered copper, a Pharaoh in front of three small pyramids with “Egyptian Room” in an exotic typeface. When completed in 1955, the flamboyant Pyramid Room was an elaborately decorated cocktail lounge that featured a wide bar with stools, piano bar, settees, a circular hearth, and custom murals and other artwork (**Figure 7**). All of those original elements have been removed. It now serves as a banquet room. Original plate glass windows and a metal-framed glazed entry door on the room’s east elevation—originally the main entrance to the Pyramid Room—look out onto a narrow courtyard enclosed by a rock wall.

The smaller Egyptian Room remains a community meeting/banquet room. Its plate glass window and glazed entry door leads to the narrow courtyard shared by the Pyramid Room. For many years the Egyptian Room doubled as an entertainment showroom for the numerous performers who were booked there—generally singers, musical groups, and comedians (**Figure 8**). Original plans show that a sliding door connected the Pyramid Room with the Egyptian room. Today, larger and more numerous moveable walls can be opened to join both rooms.

Integrity

As viewed from surrounding streets, the exterior of Covina Bowl including its monumental neon sign exhibits a high level of integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, and association. In addition, the building’s 50 bowling lanes, central concourse, billiard room, game room, and several community/banquet rooms retain their original functions. The coffee shop’s counter area also remains. The building’s other interior elements have been substantially altered over time such that their integrity has been compromised.

In 1962, seven years after its construction, a 21,800 square foot addition to Covina Bowl’s south elevation was completed. The addition, designed by Powers, Daly and DeRosa, contained 20 more bowling lanes and several retail shops facing the parking lot. It shared architectural elements of the original bowling center such as precast concrete construction, a flat roof, Bouquet Canyon Rock cladding, metal-framed floor-to-ceiling glazing, and triangular shapes for the canopy openings and support columns. Because (1) the 1962 addition occurred within seven years of Covina Bowl’s initial construction as a response to booming demand, (2) the materials, scale and theme are consistent with the original design, and (3) the property’s original architects designed the expansion, the addition does not negatively affect integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling and association. The period of significance, 1955-1962, reflects this conclusion.

The giant A-frame pyramid that marks the main entrance is a key element of the 1955 design. However, due to the expansion of the adjacent Pyramid Room, the lower portion of the floor-to-ceiling metal-framed glazing that originally filled the triangular space has since been bisected by a tall concrete block wall. This new wall, decorated with an incongruous Mayan Revival pattern, begins at the original exterior Bouquet Canyon Rock wall to the right of the entrance, cuts into

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the folded plate canopy, and curves through the glazing into the entry lobby.⁴ A door now connects the lobby with the enlarged Pyramid Room. Due to these alterations, the main entrance through the pyramid is half the size of its original configuration. As relates to integrity, this modification in such a prominent location is the most noticeable change to the original exterior design. Yet, despite this change, the soaring pyramid continues to mark the primary entrance, glazing still fills the upper portion of the pyramid, and the folded plate canopy still penetrates the glazing into the lobby. As a result, when viewed from the driveway or street, the dynamic Googie style folded plate canopy and pyramid entrance retain their original function and thematic power such that overall physical integrity, as well as integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association, are not critically compromised.

As noted, the Pyramid Room was completely remodeled when it was converted from a cocktail lounge into a banquet room, in the early 2000s.⁵ At that time most of the original elements were removed including a cantilevered terrazzo hearth with its octagonal-shaped metal hood, the wooden grid-like soffit suspended from the ceiling, the curved cocktail bar, the piano bar, settees, leather booths, light fixtures, planters, wall coverings, murals and other artwork. The Bouquet Canyon Rock wall and plate glass windows that look onto the small landscaped courtyard are original. In the Egyptian Room, originally a banquet room that once hosted well-known performers, the series of plate glass windows between the exterior baffles have been replaced with a solid wall. Also, one of two floor-to-ceiling windows that faced the narrow exterior rock wall and courtyard has been infilled with wood paneling and a metal-framed door. In addition, original light fixtures and wall coverings have been replaced. The original Bouquet Canyon Rock wall that abuts the glazing remains extant.

The loss of the Pyramid Room's cocktail lounge and the Egyptian Room's entertainment showroom function is unfortunate because both were major reasons for the success of Covina Bowl. At a time when the options for swanky adult nightlife in the East San Gabriel Valley were limited, the Pyramid and Egyptian Rooms served that function. So much so that the Pyramid Room was expanded in what appears to have been the 1970s.⁶ It was only when bowling center cocktail lounges as well as live entertainment no longer drew a consistent crowd that these rooms lost their relevance. Today, the Pyramid Room and Egyptian Room are nondescript banquet rooms having lost integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

The northwest portion of the building contains the Garden Room, Board Room, Conference Room, and beauty parlor. When Covina Bowl opened in 1956, the children's nursery was where the Garden Room is now. By 1962, plans show that the nursery had been relocated to where the locker room had been (behind the game room) with the former nursery rechristened the Garden Room. The Board Room and Conference Room currently used by the public were originally

⁴ The Bouquet Canyon Rock wall to the right of the main entrance originally had a "Pyramid Room" channel letter neon sign attached to it that has since been removed. Similarly, the rock wall fronting the Pyramid Room's exterior courtyard originally had a "Cocktails" neon sign attached to it that has also been removed. The original holes for the neon tubes still exist on both walls.

⁵ No building permits documenting these alterations were located at Covina City Hall.

⁶ Ibid.

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identified as “general office,” “private office,” and “conference room,” for use by the staff. The beauty parlor was added within a few years of Covina Bowl’s initial construction with primary access from the recessed courtyard.

In recent years the original bowling control counter, scoring tables, ball returns, scoring screens, bowler seating, and viewer seating have been replaced with contemporary versions. Elongated tables with chairs have replaced a mosaic tile wall that separated the concourse from the lower bowling area. A small open mechanical lift was installed at the north end of the bowling lanes for handicapped access. Alley lighting has been modified for now-popular black light night bowling with music supplied by local DJs. These upgrades to the bowling area have occurred industry-wide at bowling alleys throughout Southern California as a matter of economic survival. The demographic of young bowlers cultivated by bowling centers apparently demand a contemporary entertainment experience. Yet, despite the loss of physical integrity due to the replacement of original equipment, Covina Bowl continues to operate as a 50-lane bowling center such that it retains the key aspects of integrity—design, setting, feeling, and association—relevant to its original bowling function.

Although Covina Bowl’s large commercial kitchen is operational for banquets and other special events, the coffee shop that fronts it has been closed since the 1990s. While the coffee shop’s original counter, stainless steel pie cases, period clock, and cantilevered bar stools remain, the remodeling of the adjacent booth dining area, perhaps in the 1980s, resulted in its current vaguely Mediterranean appearance.⁷ The exterior entrance to the coffee shop is flush with the east elevation; however, originally the entrance was recessed 10 feet into the building with large planters to the left (south) that have since been replaced with glazed office space. Building permits from 1974 document the addition of a freezer room, storage area, and trash enclosure behind (north of) the kitchen area.

The non-original snack bar in the center’s main entrance lobby is where food items are currently dispensed to customers. The rental and sales counter itself was moved from the entry lobby to its current location in the center concourse. In addition, the small original cocktail bar with several stools near the bowling lanes has been remodeled.

Covina Bowl’s billiards room has been reduced in size by the installation of metal-framed plate glass walls that currently house office space. Because of this, the former entrance from the lobby into the billiard room has been closed and covered with wood paneling. While the game room is extant (although with non-original light fixtures) it has been expanded east to incorporate what was the children’s nursery that, in 1955, was originally the locker room. In addition, the beauty parlor has since closed.

Other Covina Bowl modifications include a low concrete block wall that encloses small areas for landscaping on either side of the main entrance and along the front of the building; paver tiles that cover original flooring at all exterior entrances, the small courtyard, and inside the coffee

⁷ No building permits documenting these alterations were located at Covina City Hall.

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shop; the addition of a metal framed glazed courtyard door to the Egyptian Room; and new rear lit signs announcing “Brunswick Covina Bowl” placed on the northeast and southeast corners of the parking lot. A see-through mesh screen originally held the name “Covina” on the upper triangle of the towering sign. The stylized “C” on a background of ribbed metal attached to the mesh screen appears to have been installed in the late 1960s.

The enumeration of primarily interior alterations negatively affecting the property’s integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and in some cases feeling, does not compromise the integrity of Covina Bowl as a whole. This is because the property, especially its exuberant exterior, continues to display the key architectural qualities that made it a prototype for dozens of bowling centers designed by Powers, Daly and DeRosa and many other architects throughout the country in the following decade. Further, the building continues to embody the Googie architectural style, displays the key elements of its Egyptian theme, and retains its function as a 50-lane bowling alley in its original setting and location.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1955 Construction completed

1962 Major addition

Significant Dates

1955 Construction completed

1962 Major addition

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Powers, Daly and DeRosa, architects

Brutocao and Company, builder

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

Covina Bowl is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as the original prototype for the hundreds of elaborate, multi-use entertainment/bowling centers that followed in the mid-1950s and into the 1960s in Southern California and across the United States. It was designed by the masters of bowling center architecture, Powers, Daly and DeRosa, who designed 72 bowling centers during their career. In addition, Covina Bowl embodies the Google architectural style; continues to display the key elements of its Egyptian theme; and retains its function as a 50-lane bowling alley in its original setting and location. Its two periods of significance are 1955 and 1962 corresponding with initial construction (1955) and a major 21,800 square foot addition of 20 bowling lanes and several retail spaces (1962).

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

Covina

When the city was incorporated in 1901, it was less than one square mile in size with a population of a little over 2,000 people. As the city grew in area and population over the next five decades, Covina—along with other East San Gabriel Valley cities and townships—continued to be identified with citrus groves. It was not until the 1950s that the groves began to be systematically replaced by new housing tracts and commercial buildings. There are no longer active citrus groves in Covina and the city's population has grown to 49,000.

The post-World War II transition of the East San Gabriel Valley from agricultural to residential mirrored that of cities throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties due to rapid population growth and the concomitant desire to live in single-family houses in the suburbs. An expanding job base in the aerospace and other industries made this possible. The increase in housing in the 1950s was initially not matched by an increase in recreational and community activities sufficient for the growing population of Covina and nearby cities. It was this desire for family-oriented leisure activities along with new dining options and evening entertainment that led the Brutocao brothers—local contractors and land developers—to commission what would be the largest recreation center of its type in the United States when it opened in 1956: Covina Bowl.

History of Bowling

The primitive urge to throw things most likely led to the evolution of bowling. British paleontologist Sir Flinders Petrie found bowling-related articles in the tomb of an Egyptian child buried near Cairo about 5,200 B.C.⁸ There is evidence that the game was played by the ancient

⁸ H. Thomas Steele, *Bowl-O-Rama: The Visual Arts of Bowling* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 8.

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Greeks, Romans, and Polynesians. Bowling as known today probably originated in Germany as part of a religious rite known as kegel (with participants known as keglers). It then spread throughout Europe as a nonspiritual game of competition and fun. In the British Isles the Italian game of bocce became bowles or lawn bowling. It was not long before wagering on bowling matches became common with aristocrats and commoners alike. This led to periodic bans of the sport by religious and governmental bodies.

In the New World, Dutch explorers and traders introduced a form of pin bowling known as skittles or ninepins. British settlers in America played lawn bowles in the area of lower Manhattan still known as Bowling Green.⁹ By the mid-1800s in America, bowling matches were often held by tavern owners where betting and rowdiness led to periodic laws against the game. “However, when indoor lanes such as Knickerbocker Alleys in Manhattan opened in the 1840s, weather and time factors became inconsequential. This alone caused a tremendous rise in the game’s growth and popularized the sport.”¹⁰ Soon cities across the United States had indoor bowling alleys, particularly in areas with large German immigrant populations.

The Germans contributed good times, camaraderie, and beer to the game. They organized teams and leagues, encouraging even women to bowl. As women took up the sport, out went unsavory spittoons and cursing in public, down went rugs and in came clean-shaven attendants. The derogatory connotations of ‘alley’ caused it to be changed to ‘lane’ and later to ‘center.’¹¹

In 1895, The American Bowling Congress issued long-needed rules and standards that were soon adopted across the nation, remaining basically unchanged and adhered to since then. Bowling became a favorite social activity of fraternal groups such as the Kiwanis, Elks, and Shriners. The Prohibition era of the 1920s eliminated alcohol, an important source of income for bowling proprietors. The Great Depression of the 1930s bankrupted many of those that remained. It was World War II that brought back bowling’s popularity. Defense employment and travel limitations created a new demand for recreational activities that were within easy reach of transportation. Because factories operated around the clock, leagues started at all hours to accommodate the various shifts. Women took up bowling during the war years, encouraged by the Women’s International Bowling Congress.

The primary limitation to the further growth of the sport was the need for pinsetters, known as pin boys, to reset bowling pins for each game and to return the balls on tracks adjacent to the lanes.

An indispensable part of the game, [pin boys] were hard to get, tough to control, and difficult to keep. Although many successful business and professional men had been pin boys in their first jobs, that function was performed most often by truants and those bordering on the criminal and alcoholic. Any upscale teenager in

⁹ Steele, 10.

¹⁰ Steele, 12.

¹¹ Ibid.

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his right mind would rather find safer employment behind a soda fountain than dodge sixteen-pound mineralite balls and flying pins game after game.¹²

In addition, pin boys had the reputation of being surly and impatient with slow bowlers (pin boys were paid by the number of games played). The invention of the automatic pinspotter (or pinsetter) after World War II and its first use in 1952 revolutionized the game of bowling.

Bowling Centers as Academic Subject

The bowling center as a midcentury architectural type and cultural phenomenon has thus far received a limited amount of academic attention. Fortunately, two highly regarded historians have devoted considerable time and effort to the subject: Alan Hess and Andrew Hurley. Architect and historian Alan Hess is the architecture critic of the *San Jose Mercury News*. He has written 19 books on Modern architecture and urbanism in the mid-twentieth century. Hess is an acknowledged expert on the Googie architectural style as the author of two primers on the subject, both of which include discussions of midcentury bowling centers in America.¹³ Andrew Hurley is Professor of History at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.¹⁴ Hurley's chapter on bowling alleys in his book *Diners, Bowling Alleys and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture* is a comprehensive institutional and cultural history of the subject. For this nomination, their research and analyses were incorporated into understanding the historic trends occurring locally and nationally for the subject property and for making the case for significance of Covina Bowl and its eligibility for National Register listing.

Bowling Centers and the Growth of the Suburbs

Prior to World War II, bowling alleys focused on the sport itself. After the war, however, a number of factors led to a major transformation of the type. In particular, the realization of an automatic pinspotter by the American Machine and Foundry Company (AMF) was the catalyst that led to a substantial increase in business. With automatic pinspotters and the elimination of pin boys, quick and accurate pin replacement led to more relaxed play. In addition, by relocating the ball returns underground and installing acoustical tile, the noise level was considerably reduced. Up until AMF introduced the automatic pinspotter, Brunswick had been the dominant leader in the bowling industry. Caught off guard by AMF's technological triumph, it took three more years until Brunswick introduced their version of a pinspotter, giving AMF a substantial head start in supplying new bowling equipment to the industry.

As California cities expanded into suburban areas at the edge of traditional cities, several new architectural types developed to respond to the new ways of life, the increased prosperity of the population, and the automobile as a primary transportation system. California architects led the

¹² Steele, p 17.

¹³ Alan Hess, *Googie: Fifties Coffee Shop Architecture* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1986) and *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2004).

¹⁴ Andrew Hurley, *Diners, Bowling Alleys and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).

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way in the development of several new suburban building types, including ranch house tract subdivisions, car-oriented drive-in restaurants and coffee shops, drive-in movies, and shopping centers.

With the growth of the suburbs, family-oriented activities came into demand. The bowling industry promoted this expansion, particularly in suburban areas as families moved into new, large scale housing tracts.¹⁵ Because of the rapid growth of California's population (the state became the most populous in the nation in 1964), and the tremendous boom in the development of suburbs to house this population, California became an important trendsetter in designing and defining suburbia.

Suburbs were often built in areas that had been primarily agricultural. As families moved into the mass produced housing tracts, there was often a lack of conveniently located services and meeting places. Because of the popularity of bowling as a sport, the bowling alley was often one of the first non-residential building types to be constructed in these new suburban areas. The Long Beach-based architectural firm of Powers, Daly and DeRosa was the first to promote programmatic amenities to developers beyond the bowling lanes themselves that would attract more people to their large centers, thus increasing profits. These amenities included coffee shops, cocktail lounges, day care, community rooms, and banquet rooms. For women, nurseries and day care facilities allowed time for unhurried enjoyment of the sport. For young people, there were coffee shops in which to hang out that added to the camaraderie among friends bowling at the lanes. Often these functions and services could be accessed either through their own separate entrances from the parking lot or another entrance from the bowling lanes. Banquet rooms and community rooms were accommodated in an adjoining wing, also with their own secondary entrances. Thus, the mundane bowling alley was transformed into a multi-use bowling center, one important element in the evolution of the suburb as an urban form in the 1950s, serving both an architectural and a social role in these areas throughout California.

These new bowling centers, also known as recreation centers, served an important social need in providing a gathering place for families, teenagers, and community groups. In the newly developing suburban communities they provided a place for community organizations to meet, for celebrations to take place, and for a sense of community to develop.

While suburban bowling proprietors had no trouble defining what their establishments no longer were—inner-city dives—they struggled to define their new function in contemporary suburban society. Finding the right formula for success required that they address the peculiar aspirations and anxieties associated with the upwardly mobile, middle-income residents who lived nearby, many of whom had arrived in the suburbs only slightly earlier than the automated bowling center. The families who lived in inner suburban rings ... may have enjoyed a measure of material comfort, but they were still not in the same economic league as upper-crust elites who whiled away their hours at yacht basins, country clubs,

¹⁵ Steele, 14-18.

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and debutante balls. The bowling alley tried to present itself as a reasonably priced alternative to these tony leisure activities. In the words of one successful proprietor, the automated bowling centers of the 1950s were ‘the people’s country clubs.’ This ‘country club for the public’ theme was employed frequently to suggest that the elegant trappings and wide range of amenities that typified exclusive and private leisure venues could be found for a modest price in a modern bowling establishment. ... The modern bowling center made a version of the lush life available to the average suburban family.¹⁶

Bowling Center as Architectural Type

In response to the new needs of developing suburban communities in the postwar era, the architecture of bowling alleys changed dramatically as it was reconfigured and expanded to serve an important social and community role.¹⁷ Before 1945, bowling alleys were primarily one or two-story single-use buildings in traditional city centers, accessed by foot or streetcar lines, and built in line with other commercial buildings at the sidewalk. After 1945, like other car-oriented architectural types in this period, the scale and style of the bowling alley adapted to the new suburban sites appearing outside major cities. Now they were freestanding buildings situated in enormous parking lots, set back from the sidewalk and street.¹⁸ To identify their main entries, large signs, porte cocheres, and prominent entryways were integrated into the design.

The style of these establishments also often reflected Modern architecture, especially in California. Like car dealerships, coffee shops, gas stations, car washes and other car-oriented suburban architecture of the era, they typically used the Googie Modern style of exaggerated scale and ultramodern forms as a way to attract customers. The Long Beach-based architectural firm of Powers, Daly and DeRosa was responsible for designing Covina Bowl and numerous bowling/recreation centers throughout Southern California and the United States, primarily in the Googie style.

The plan of these new multi-use bowling centers accommodated the many additional functions required to serve their suburban clientele. Besides the functions directly related to the sport (the bowling lanes, spectator seating, and sales areas for shoes, balls, gloves, etc.), dining, entertainment, and social spaces such as the cocktail lounge and the coffee shop were added. In addition, some of the larger bowling centers included a beauty parlor, barber shop, and supervised childcare area.

Typical of the time, buildings associated with recreational activities such as motels, restaurants, cocktail lounges and bowling centers were often given imaginative themes to attract customers and differentiate them from the competition. There were Polynesian, Arabian, European, Native American, Asian and African themed buildings; fairytale and storybook themes, jet age themes, alpine, desert, Wild West, nautical, Barbary Coast, and Mexican themes. Located not far from

¹⁶ Hurley, pp 156-157.

¹⁷ Alan Hess. *Google Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books 2004), p 60.

¹⁸ Architect Gordon Powers states that a minimum of four acres of parking was required to accommodate cars at the new suburban bowling centers being built at that time. In person interview with Gordon Powers, March 9, 2016.

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Covina, the Disneyland theme park in Anaheim opened in 1955—the same year that Covina Bowl was completed—with its Adventureland, Fantasyland, Tomorrowland, and Frontierland attractions. By the mid-1950s, multi-themed Las Vegas featured the Sands, Sahara, Flamingo, Frontier, and Desert Inn hotel/casinos. Any theme could be applied to almost any type of commercial building. For Covina Bowl, the building's façade, landscaping, furnishings, and decorative artwork were inspired by ancient Egypt.

Covina Bowl as Bowling Center Prototype¹⁹

Covina Bowl is an excellent and prototypical example of this new suburban bowling center architectural type developed for the needs of the bowler, the community, and the owner of the facility. To make the low horizontal structure visible and attractive to motorists driving by, Covina Bowl's large pyramid-shaped entry is a striking form that creates a distinctive urban landmark in the wide spaces of suburban development (**Figure 9**). It was inspired by the thin shell concrete forms of architect/engineer Felix Candela; his unconventional geometric shapes generated by advanced engineering were considered hallmarks of the modern age, and Covina Bowl designer Pat DeRosa sought to achieve the same effect.²⁰

Covina Bowl's tall neon sign intentionally echoes and complements the angular pyramidal entry. A distinctive porte cochere canopy with its folded plate roof marks the entry and provides a gracious welcome to people arriving by automobile. It also stretches out to the sidewalk as a shelter for those arriving on foot. The canopy is supported on asymmetrical pillars clad in natural, irregular Bouquet Canyon Rock. To the right of the entry, a walled court provides light and landscaping for the banquet rooms. At a secondary canopied entrance on the north side, another landscaped court with a glass wall lets light into the community rooms and provides a scenic outlook.

These architectural elements are distinctly Modern, expressing the culture's interest in the new in this period of expansion. The materials and composition reflect Modern Organic architectural principles combining natural materials with new technological, engineered materials. The integrated landscaping and rock pillars are natural materials, while the folded plate canopy roof, patterned concrete block walls, and neon signage reflect new technology. All these discrete forms are integrated in a well-balanced composition to create an energetic design expressive of the modern era.

The 1955 Covina Bowl was the first large scale, full-service bowling center by Powers, Daly and DeRosa.²¹ It became the prototype that influenced the architects' future work in California and nationwide, as well as the hundreds of elaborate bowling centers designed by other architects that appeared throughout the country in the following decade.²²

¹⁹ Adapted from essay prepared for this nomination by Alan Hess.

²⁰ Hess, 64.

²¹ In person interview with Gordon Powers, March 9, 2016.

²² Mort Luby Jr., "Powers, Daly and DeRosa," *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue* (Vol. 49, No. 9, September 1962), 32.

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Googie Architectural Style

Googie was an expressive, attention-grabbing architectural style associated with commercial buildings that first appeared in the Los Angeles area in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The buildings most closely associated with the Googie style are the Modern coffee shops, car washes, bowling alleys, automobile showrooms, and other types of vernacular commercial architecture common to the American roadside during this time period. Googie was an architectural style uniquely adapted to the needs of the postwar automobile environment. Characteristics of the style include enormous exaggerated and angled roofs that appear to float over large expanses of plate glass walls. In addition, the ability to “bring the outdoors in” made possible through the technology of floor-to-ceiling glass was a typical Googie-style design element. Other character defining features include abstracted geometric plans and site-specific themes, the integration of natural and synthetic materials such as stone walls, terrazzo flooring, plate glass, stainless steel, plastic, and fiberglass. Exaggerated and often colorful architectural elements combined with large neon-lit signage were specifically designed to draw the attention of speeding motorists. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, elements associated with the space age such as uplifted or tilting rooflines, were particularly emphasized. Acknowledged masters of the Googie style include Los Angeles-based architects Louis Armet and Eldon Davis, John Lautner, Douglas Honnold, Martin Stern, Jr., and Covina Bowl architects Powers, Daly, and DeRosa of Long Beach.

Covina Bowl is an excellent example of the Googie architectural style because it exhibits most of the idiom’s key character defining elements (**Figure 10**). It is a commercial building designed for a suburban auto-oriented setting that features an enormous pyramid entrance and soaring triangular neon “Covina” sign that immediately attracts the attention of motorists.²³ The exaggerated design of the folded plate entrance canopy/porte cochere appears to float above sturdy rock piers demonstrating the style’s melding of modern forms with natural materials. While Covina Bowl is primarily rectangular in plan with fewer windows than most Googie style buildings, floor-to-ceiling glazing in the entrance pyramid itself, on the east elevation of the Pyramid Room, in the Egyptian Room, and the north and east elevations of the recessed courtyard brought the landscaped outdoors in. In addition, consistent with the tenets of the style, Covina Bowl features terrazzo floors; natural rock walls that abut concrete tilt-slab elevations and plate glass windows; stainless steel surfaces of the coffee shop; since-removed space age plastic scoring tables, ball returns, and seating of the bowling area lanes; and brightly colored interior and exterior decorative and architectural elements that originally embellished the exuberant building.

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²³ The original “Covina” name on the monumental sign was later replaced by a stylized “C.”

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Originally from Toronto, Canada the Brutocao brothers—Angelo, Leonard and Lewis—had relocated to Covina just after World War II. In Canada, they had been successful in the appliance manufacturing business and in the construction field. The brothers repeated their success in the East San Gabriel Valley, becoming well-known local contractors and developers.²⁴

In 1954, the Brutacao brothers approached the western area representative for AMF, Larry Matson, about their desire for a new bowling enterprise in Covina using AMF's pinspotting technology.²⁵ Larry Matson, having worked with Powers, Daly and DeRosa on their first bowling alley recently completed in Riverside, California, recommended the architectural firm to the Brutacao brothers. At their initial meeting, Gordon Powers presented a concept for a much more elaborate operation than the traditional bowling enterprise with which the Brutacaos were already familiar. Apparently, the Brutacao brothers were convinced by Powers' argument, commissioning the firm to design what the *San Gabriel Daily Tribune* would describe as "the finest, the ultimate in family recreation facilities for the people of the East San Gabriel Valley."²⁶ Covina Bowl would be not just a bowling alley but a full-service entertainment center consisting of 30 bowling lanes, billiard room, game, room, cocktail lounge, banquet hall/live entertainment space, restaurant, community gathering place, and daycare facility.

With the Brutocao brothers serving as general contractors, Covina Bowl was completed in 1955 (**Figure 11**). Its grand opening was held on February 11, 1956 at 8pm. Co-masters of ceremonies were famed Southland radio and television sportscaster Gill Stratton and Al Bine of the Los Angeles Bowling Authority. The mayors of Covina, West Covina, Baldwin Park, Azusa, and Glendora were present at the opening.

A special multipage commemorative section of the local *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune* newspaper (aka *Daily Tribune*) was published to coincide with the grand opening (**Figure 12**). It began with this headline: "Fabulous Covina Bowl Will Open Feb. 11. Recreation Center Has No Peer in Southland" (**Figure 13**). The enterprise was described as "a fabulous recreation center whose opulence rivals that of the days of the Egyptian pharaohs from which it takes its architectural motif," and "Virtually a city within itself," a "Dream Palace of Recreation." AMF in a congratulatory ad called Covina Bowl "The World's Most Beautiful Bowling Establishment."²⁷

Wrote the *Daily Tribune*, "Some 16 months through dream, drawing board and construction, the Covina Bowl offers unparalleled recreation facilities to residents of the East San Gabriel Valley. Sports authorities agree that it is without a peer in the entire Southland and matched by but few throughout the entire United States."²⁸

²⁴ Louis Brutocao (1920-2008) was mayor of Covina from 1973-1976.

²⁵ In person interview with Gordon Powers. March 9, 2016.

²⁶ *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune*, "Fabulous Covina Bowl Will Open Feb. 11. Recreation Center Has No Peer In Southland," February 1956, not paginated.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

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Initially there were 30 bowling lanes with “amazing, completely automatic pin setters” (**Figure 14**). A supervised day nursery and outdoor play area for children were included “for mothers who wish[ed] to enjoy the many diversions offered” (**Figure 15**), and “a parking lot designed to hold hundreds of cars [was] also a part of the vast recreation system.”²⁹

In particular, Covina Bowl’s Egyptian Room, a 125-seat banquet space, “fulfill[ed] a need in the East San Gabriel Valley for use by Valley service clubs and other organizations.”³⁰ The room hosted such events as chamber of commerce meetings, Woman’s Club luncheons, and political events (George Wallace spoke in 1968). In addition, the Egyptian Room doubled as a live entertainment showroom that presented well-known performers such as comic duo Rowan and Martin, Liberace, comedienne Rusty Warren, crooner Mel Torme, the Smothers Brothers, and many others.

Covina Bowl was designed so that its 30-lane bowling area would be free of support columns. A photograph of the bowling area in the *Daily Tribune*, had the caption, “This overall view of the bowling alleys of the Covina Bowl shows the new standards other alleys of the nation must meet. There is an unobstructed view across the complete 30 alleys, a rare thing in bowling alleys where pillars are a matter of course.” (**Figure 16**) Special acoustic tile installed over the bowling area “has overcome 90 percent of the usual noise with the remaining 10 percent for ‘atmosphere.’” Covina Bowl’s billiard room was “a far cry from the smoke-filled, dimly-lit lounges usually associated with that sport.”³¹

Of the building’s overall theme and design, the *Daily Tribune* exclaimed, “The Bowl, with its Egyptian flavor in its genuine color, abstract art and hieroglyphic coupled with the pyramid shape at the entrance, is well in advance of an architectural era to come with functional, yet artistic uses being combined for public buildings.”³² (**Figure 17**)

Murals and other artwork adorning the walls of Covina Bowl (since removed) were the work of Barbara Davis of West Covina who had studied at Chouinard’s Art School and Center in Los Angeles. The largest mural was done in an abstract modern Egyptian motif consisting of bronze and oils combined with copper and wirework.

The generous incorporation of rock cladding for exterior and interior surfaces “enhanced the natural beauty of [Covina Bowl’s] design.” Several varieties of Bouquet Canyon Rock were used in piers, walls, and planters throughout the building. Work was carried out by Giuseppe (Joe) Mascarin, a skilled artisan who learned his craft in Italy. “Mascarin with painstaking care personally selected and fitted into place each individual piece of stone to create a pattern of everlasting appeal whose beauty will grow through the passage of time.”³³

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

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Landscaping, an integral part of the new recreation center, was planned and executed by Garden Cart Nurseries, Inc. of Covina. Wrote the *Daily Tribune*, “The landscape architects have successfully adapted the Egyptian motif of the Bowl in the theme of the plantings and land arrangements, exercising great care in the blending of desert-like plants in this unusual setting to achieve the result of allowing the individual to feel he is standing before an exotic building in far-away Egypt gazing out upon the strange vegetation of that land.”³⁴

Architectural firm of Powers, Daly and DeRosa

During the height of the bowling craze in America, the Chicago-based *National Bowling Journal and Billiard Revue* was the bowling industry’s leading publication.³⁵ In its 1962 annual architectural issue, the journal’s main story written by Mort Luby, Jr., the publication’s president, was about the firm of Powers, Daly and DeRosa (PD&D) (**Figure 18**). The 12-page article lauded PD&D as the creators of the elaborate full-service bowling center archetype pioneered by the firm’s 1955 Covina Bowl that had revolutionized the bowling industry across the nation.³⁶

Gordon F. Powers (1916-) of LeGrande, Oregon received his architectural degree from the University of Washington. Upon obtaining his architectural license, Powers opened his architectural office in Long Beach, California in 1951. Austin W. Daly (1919-2006) joined the firm in 1952. Daly, from Portland, Oregon was educated at the University of Southern California. In 1953, a local contractor approached Powers and Daly because he needed a licensed architect for a high school job in Downey. Pasquale (Pat) B. DeRosa (1922-1999) was working for the contractor at the time as a designer. Although the contractor didn’t get the job, Powers was impressed by DeRosa’s skills as a designer and invited him to join the firm as its third partner.³⁷ DeRosa was from Brooklyn having attended Pratt Institute, College of Architecture before relocating to Long Beach after World War II (**Figure 19**).

In 1953, Powers, Daly and DeRosa designed their first bowling alley.³⁸ It was located in the city of Riverside, California and took advantage of the new AMF pinspotting technology being promoted by AMF’s western area representative Larry Matson. In addition to 24 lanes, it had a small bar and a modest lunch counter. According to Gordon Powers, it quickly became clear to him that the Riverside facility would have been much more financially successful if additional amenities had been included, such as a full cocktail lounge instead of just a bar, live entertainment, a coffee shop instead of a lunch counter, and a supervised playroom for children.³⁹ This key insight would prove to be the catalyst for the explosion of full-service bowling centers that would soon be built across the nation.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ The publication was and remains the official publication of the Billiard and Bowling Institute of America. The magazine is now called *Bowlers Journal International*.

³⁶ Mort Luby Jr., “Powers, Daly and DeRosa,” 32.

³⁷ Gordon Powers was the only licensed architect in the firm. After the firm dissolved in 1964, both DeRosa and Daly obtained their architectural licenses.

³⁸ In person interview with Gordon Powers, March 9, 2016.

³⁹ Ibid.

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When the Brutacao brothers contacted Larry Matson in early 1954 about their desire to build a bowling alley in Covina, Matson recommended Powers, Daly and DeRosa. According to Powers, it was during initial discussions with the Brutacao brothers that he pitched his concept of a multi-use entertainment center consisting of bowling lanes, a billiard room, a cocktail lounge instead of a small bar, a banquet hall/live entertainment space, a restaurant instead of a lunch counter, and a daycare facility.⁴⁰ The Brutacao brothers eagerly embraced Powers' concept. The result was Covina Bowl, which "became the vanguard for the grandiose class of bowling center architecture which is still called, for want of a better label, 'California Style.'"⁴¹ (**Figure 20**)

Within the firm, Pat DeRosa was responsible for exterior design. Gordon Powers focused on planning and business operations, and Austin Daly was responsible for client management and interiors (but not at Covina Bowl). The firm also did landscape design. Powers states that it was Pat DeRosa who came up with the concept of an Egyptian-themed bowling center.⁴² From that theme flowed the design with pyramids and triangles being the central motifs. The building utilized the language of Southern California commercial modernism popular in the mid-1950s later known as the Googie style. DeRosa's exuberant color renderings that he created for their many projects revel in the style, displaying exaggerated entrance and walkway canopies, monumental signs, integration of natural materials such as rock cladding, plate glass windows, and indoor-outdoor spaces (**Figure 21**).

Pat DeRosa was solely responsible for Covina Bowl's exterior design including its enormous sign, purposely built to a height of 60 feet to attract speeding motorists to the main entrance that was on a side street.⁴³ Wrote the *National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue's* Mort Luby, Jr., "Covina's most striking feature is the enormous peaked entryway and its imposing glass wall. This was a symbol which was to appear in future, P, D & D bowling centers."⁴⁴ According to Luby, "Covina Bowl, a frankly extravagant and unorthodox building, was a healthy money-maker from the day it opened."⁴⁵

The obvious satisfaction of the Brutacao brothers and Covina Bowl's self-generating reputation eventually brought a modest stampede of prospective bowling proprietors to P, D & D. Ethically, an architect cannot advertise or directly solicit business but Covina Bowl turned out to be a more effective advertisement than a four-color spread in *Architectural Forum*.⁴⁶ Proprietors from Passaic to Portland and Miami to Minneapolis soon began to pour down the San Bernardino freeway to see the nonconformist darling of bowling architecture which had been built in a nondescript little suburb 25 miles east of downtown Los

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Luby, 32.

⁴² In person interview with Gordon Powers, March 9, 2016.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Luby, 35.

⁴⁵ Luby, 32.

⁴⁶ Luby, 36.

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Angeles.⁴⁷ ... [Soon] new bowling centers springing up in California bore a striking resemblance to Covina Bowl. The soaring, triangular entrance canopy, which had been one of Covina Bowl's most striking innovations, became a sort of architectural cliché.⁴⁸

For PD&D, Covina Bowl was the beginning of a profitable and exciting relationship with the bowling industry. Indeed, "P, D & D's stock as the architectural leaders of the bowling world really began to soar when *Life* magazine [in 1958] printed a full page, full color picture of Bel Mateo [Bowl]'s totem pole."⁴⁹ "Contracts started coming fast and furious. In one frantic period, P, D & D had seven bowling centers on the drawing boards and several abuilding."⁵⁰ PD&D's success and influence were so great that between 1955 and 1962, the firm designed 47 bowling centers with "the firm's little second floor office in Long Beach a maze of scale models, working drawings and color renderings of the best looking bowling centers in the nation. ... Their brainchildren range in size from 16 to 116 lanes and are sprinkled across the United States from Pennsylvania to California."⁵¹ (**Figure 22**)

DeRosa's decision to select an Egyptian theme for Covina Bowl may have seemed groundbreaking to bowling proprietors in 1955, but applying an exotic theme in this period was de rigueur for many other types of recreational buildings. Among PD&D's themed bowling centers these are some of the most noteworthy:

Java Lanes in Long Beach, California, with its exotic wall decorations and its East India Lounge, employed a Polynesian motif [**Figure 23**]. [...] With a towering stylized modern totem pole gracing its entrance, the Bel Mateo Bowling Center in San Mateo, California, featured the imagery of Pacific Northwest Native American culture. The highlight of the Persian-themed Futurama Bowl in San Jose, California, was its 'Magic Carpet Room,' a cocktail lounge adorned with 470,000 hanging beads [**Figure 24**].⁵²

The most ambitious bowling center ever designed by the firm was Willow Grove Lanes in North Philadelphia that opened in 1961 (**Figure 25**). With 116 lanes it was the world's largest bowling center at the time. Located adjacent to an amusement park, Willow Grove Lanes had three large restaurants (one of which was a Tiki Room), a soda bar for teenagers, and a children's nursery, among other amenities. The building's most extraordinary feature was the spectacular 116-foot long parabola that marked the main entrance.⁵³ Said DeRosa at the time, Willow Grove Lanes

⁴⁷ Luby, 32.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Luby, 32, re: *Life* magazine March 17, 1958. Bel Mateo was a PD&D bowling center in San Mateo, California erected in 1956. Its theme was Pacific Northwest Native American.

⁵⁰ Luby, 36.

⁵¹ Luby, 32.

⁵² Hurley, 154.

⁵³ Coincidentally, the number of lanes was 116 as was the length of the entrance parabola.

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was “the summation of all of our efforts in the bowling field.” The clients “wanted to make sure that they wound up with the biggest and best bowling center in the world.”⁵⁴

Covina Bowl demonstrated one of the firm’s basic architectural doctrines: the use of native materials wherever possible; in this case, Bouquet Canyon Rock for canopy piers and exterior and interior walls. Said DeRosa in 1962, “That rock will look as good 50 years from now as it does today.”⁵⁵ He added, “We feel that the natural materials, preferably those which are native to the area, are more attractive than plaster and paint. Most of our clients, fortunately, agree with us. But it is after the building has been in use for a while that they really appreciate these materials. Plaster walls and acoustical tile ceilings need constant maintenance. Natural materials do not.”⁵⁶ Wrote Luby, “The blending of natural stone, exposed wood and cork tends to give P, D & D buildings a warmth seldom encountered in bowling plants.”⁵⁷ **(Figure 26)**

As relates to the multi-use aspect of bowling centers, PD&D were adamant about the necessity of providing upscale amenities.

Powers, Daly & DeRosa buildings usually feature sizeable and elaborate dining and drinking facilities, a factor which has been loudly criticized. One of the holy doctrines of bowling center operations specifically abhors restaurants as money-losing propositions. According to P, D & D it is precisely this defeatist attitude which helps incur losses in a restaurant-bar operation. [According to DeRosa,] ‘A nondescript little snack bar is not very inviting. Let’s face it, a bowling proprietor cannot compete with a really fine restaurant. But he has built-in traffic, something that no other restaurant has. With good planning, an operator can turn a profit if he has adequate and pleasant banquet and lounge facilities. [...] We usually suggest that an operator provide for entertainment in his lounge. It doesn’t have to be elaborate, although a lot of houses in Southern California have discovered that top drawer acts from Las Vegas bring in droves of customers. If this formula works in Southern California where you have so much in the way of entertainment it ought to be even more successful in smaller areas. There is money in liquor and entertainment.’⁵⁸

According to Gordon Powers, the firm designed 72 bowling centers between 1955 and when the partnership dissolved in the mid-1960s. Yet, during this period, historian Andrew Hurley writes,

Architectural critics dismissed the work of Powers, Daly, and DeRosa, condemning their buildings as garish and far too expensive to build and maintain. The three California architects did not deny that their designs were extravagant and fanciful. As Pat DeRosa, the youngest member of the architectural trio

⁵⁴ Luby, 37.

⁵⁵ Luby, 35.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Luby, 36.

⁵⁸ Luby, 44.

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explained, ‘Frankly, we don’t want a client who is trying to get buy as cheaply as possible. It’s our feeling that a really attractive building *will* bring in business.’ The automatic pinsetter attracted big-money investors to bowling, people who had both the capital and the will to finance the construction of expensive and attractive buildings that screamed, ‘Have fun here!’ The eye-popping décor seemed to strike a chord among suburban bowlers, many of whom were experiencing material affluence for the first time. Thus, despite the derision they elicited in architectural circles, Powers, Daly, & DeRosa became the darlings of the bowling industry. Their designs were widely emulated, not just in California but across the country.⁵⁹

Therefore, based on this evidence, Powers, Daly and DeRosa are clearly master architects of the bowling center type. With Covina Bowl not only did they pioneer the concept of the themed, multi-use entertainment/bowling center, they were recognized as the foremost designers of the architectural type during the bowling boom of the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s. What is so remarkable is that Covina Bowl, the prototype for the hundreds of bowling centers built during this period across the United States, remains extant, exhibiting sufficient integrity to demonstrate its architectural significance 60 years after its construction in a modest suburb of Los Angeles.

The Demise of the Bowling Center

As quickly as it had exploded in popularity, by the mid-1960s the bowling boom was over. “The rash of bowling alley construction in the wake of automation saturated suburban markets in the major metropolitan areas. Proprietors complained that too much competition was eroding their patronage, forcing them to reduce prices to untenable levels.”⁶⁰ Then, starting in the 1970s as the popularity of bowling began to wane, the expansive properties upon which the bowling centers sat became more valuable as sites for new shopping centers or residential developments. As a result, bowling centers began to disappear. By the 2000s, most had been demolished. The remaining ones are part of a six billion dollar industry that has remade itself by embracing new trends like black light bowling and live DJs. To survive, Covina Bowl has followed this trend.

In recent decades, bowling center cocktail lounges, entertainment showrooms, and coffee shops have not attracted enough customers to justify continued operation. Similarly, the demand for bowling center community meeting spaces and banquet rooms remains weak as newer alternatives have appeared throughout the East San Gabriel Valley. Yet, Covina Bowl’s 50 bowling lanes continue to attract leagues and individual bowlers in 2016.

Current Status of Powers, Daly and DeRosa Bowling Centers

The following is a list of bowling centers designed by Powers, Daly and DeRosa and their status. No comprehensive inventory of the 72 bowling centers designed by the firm was located during the current survey process. In addition, architect Gordon Powers did not retain an inventory

⁵⁹ Hurley, 155.

⁶⁰ Hurley, 191.

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following the dissolution of the firm in the mid-1960s. Of the 21 Powers, Daly and DeRosa bowling centers identified here, many have been razed, closed, or changed use.

- 300 Bowl (now AMF Christown Lanes), 1958. Phoenix, AZ. Operating as bowling center.
- Anaheim Bowl, 1957. Anaheim, CA. This was another Brutocao property built after Covina Bowl. Demolished.
- Bel Mateo Bowl, 1956. San Mateo, CA. Exterior substantially altered but operating as bowling center.
- Bowlium Lanes, 1957. Montclair, CA. Operating as bowling center.
- Camino Bowl (Golobic's Camino Bowl), 1956. Mountain View, CA. Demolished.
- Celebrity Lanes, 1959. Denver, CO. Demolished.
- Country Club Lanes, 1960. Sacramento, CA. Operating as bowling center.
- Covina Bowl, 1955. Covina, CA. Operating as bowling center. [Figure 9]
- Friendly Hills Bowl, 1956. Whittier, CA. Closed.
- Futurama Bowl, 1961. San Jose, CA. Demolished. [Figures 25 and 26]
- Garden Square Bowling Center, 1957. Garden Grove, CA. Demolished.
- Imperial Bowl, 1956. El Segundo, CA. Demolished.
- Java Lanes, 1958. Long Beach, CA. Demolished. [Figure 23]
- Lakewood Bowl, 1954. Lakewood, CA. Demolished.
- Mar-Lin-Do Lanes, 1956. Burbank, CA. Demolished.
- Mercury Bowl, 1957. Pico Rivera, CA. Demolished.
- Plaza Bowl, ca. 1958. National City, CA. Demolished. [Figure 26]
- Reseda Bowl, 1956. Reseda, CA. Now a church.
- Seaview Lanes, 1956. Seattle, WA. Demolished
- Sportsman Bowl (aka Woodley Lewis Sportsman Bowl, Skateland USA), 1962. Compton, CA. Converted to skating rink. Closed.
- Willow Grove Park Lanes, 1960. Willow Grove, PA. Demolished. [Figures 21 and 25]

Status of Notable Southern California Bowling Centers By Other Architects

- Arena Bowl, 1958. South Gate. Architect: Unknown. Demolished.
- Aztec Bowl, 1960. Buena Park. Architect: Unknown. Demolished.
- Bay Shore Lanes, 1958. Santa Monica. Architect: William L. Rudolph. Operating as bowling center.
- Bowlero, 1958. San Diego. Architect: Unknown. Now Scottish Rite Event Center.
- Holiday Bowl, 1958. Crenshaw District, Los Angeles. Architect: Armet & Davis. Coffee Shop rehabilitated. Remainder of bowling center demolished.
- Hollywood Legion Lanes, 1959. Los Angeles. Architect: William L. Rudolph Demolished.
- Hollywood Star Lanes, ca.1955. Hollywood, CA. Architect: Unknown. Demolished.

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- Irv Noren's Lanes (later Bahama Lanes), 1957. Pasadena, CA. Architect: William L. Rudolph. Remodeled beyond recognition.
- Kapu Kai, ca. 1958. Rancho Cucamonga, CA. Architects: Tally-Guevara Associates. Demolished.
- Kona Lanes, 1958. Costa Mesa, CA. Architect: Unknown. Demolished.
- Mar Vista Bowl, 1959. Mar Vista, CA. Architects: Armet and Davis. Exterior altered but operating as bowling center.
- Mission Hills Bowling Center, 1957. Mission Hills, CA. Architect: Martin Stern, Jr. Operating as bowling center.
- Norwalk Bowling Center, 1955/58. Norwalk, CA. Architect: David T. Witherly. Demolished.
- Parkway Bowl, ca. 1959. El Cajon, CA. Architect: Unknown. Operating as bowling center.
- South Bay Bowling Center, 1956. Redondo Beach. Architects: Jones, Emmons, Gruen. Demolished.
- Tropicana Lanes, 1959. Inglewood. Architect: H.W. Underhill. Demolished.
- Woodlake Bowl, 1961. Woodland Hills. Architect: William L. Rudolph. Exterior altered, but remains bowling alley.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: City of Covina, Department of Planning

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 4.33 acres

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Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

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

1. Latitude: 34.087882 Longitude: -117.911860

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

The nominated property is located at 1060 West San Bernardino Road, Covina, Los Angeles County, California between West San Bernardino Road on the north, Badillo Street on the south, and North Rimsdale Avenue on the east. The property fronts approximately 332 feet on the north, 230 feet on the south, 716 feet on the east, and 601 feet on the west. Its legal description is PHILLIPS TRACT RANCHO LA PUENTE LOT COM N 171 FT FROM SW COR OF LOT 2 BLK 5 TH S 89 16 E 100 FT TH S 0 34 W 150 FT TH E ON N LINE OF BADILLO ST ... SEE MAPBOOK FOR MISSING PORTION... LOT 2 BLK 5. APN: 8434-018-020

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Covina Bowl, 1060 West San Bernardino Road, Covina, CA 91722. APN 8434-018-020

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Peter Moruzzi/Architectural Historian
organization: Los Angeles Conservancy
street & number: 523 West Sixth Street, #826
city or town: Los Angeles state: CA zip code: 90014
e-mail petermoruzzi@gmail.com
telephone: 213-706-0151
date: April, 2016

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

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Photographs

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Covina Bowl

City or Vicinity: Covina

County: Los Angeles

State: CA

Photographer: Peter Moruzzi

Date Photographed: February 9, 2016

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

- 1 of 19 East elevation, camera facing southwest
- 2 of 19 East elevation, camera facing northwest
- 3 of 19 East elevation, camera facing northwest
- 4 of 19 East elevation, camera facing west
- 5 of 19 Entrance canopy and sign, camera facing east
- 6 of 19 South end of east elevation, camera facing southwest
- 7 of 19 South elevation, camera facing north
- 8 of 19 Detail, steel post of sign through canopy, camera facing east
- 9 of 19 Detail, triangular fins, east elevation, camera facing southwest
- 10 of 19 Main entrance, east elevation, camera facing west
- 11 of 19 North entrance, north elevation, camera facing southeast
- 12 of 19 Recessed courtyard with beauty parlor entrance, north elevation, camera facing south

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- 13 of 19 Interior, central concourse, camera facing south
- 14 of 19 Interior, central concourse and bowling lanes, camera facing southwest
- 15 of 19 Interior, entrance to coffee shop from central concourse, camera facing east
- 16 of 19 Interior, coffee shop, camera facing northeast
- 17 of 19 Interior, coffee shop, camera facing southeast
- 18 of 19 Interior, Pyramid Room, camera facing southeast
- 19 of 19 Detail, Egyptian Room copper sign, camera facing southeast

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- Figure 17 Covina Bowl rendering, 1955.
- Figure 18 Powers, Daly and DeRosa feature article. *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962. Page 32.
- Figure 19 Powers, Daly and DeRosa in their architectural office. *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.
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- Figure 24 Magic Carpet Room, Futurama Bowl, Sacramento, California. 1962.
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- Figure 26 Plaza Bowl, National City, California. Circa 1958.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

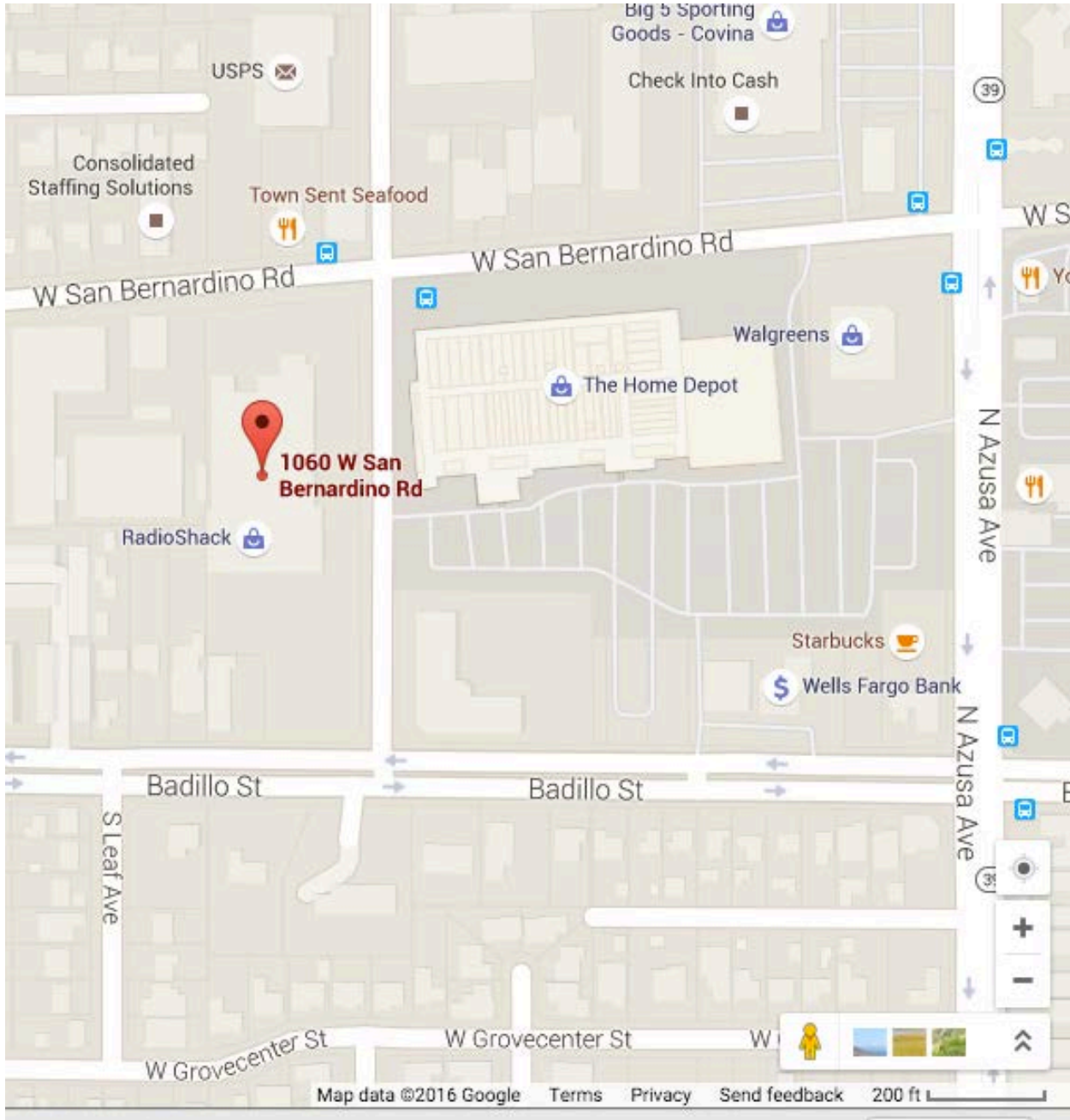
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Location Map

Latitude: 34.087882

Longitude: -117.911860



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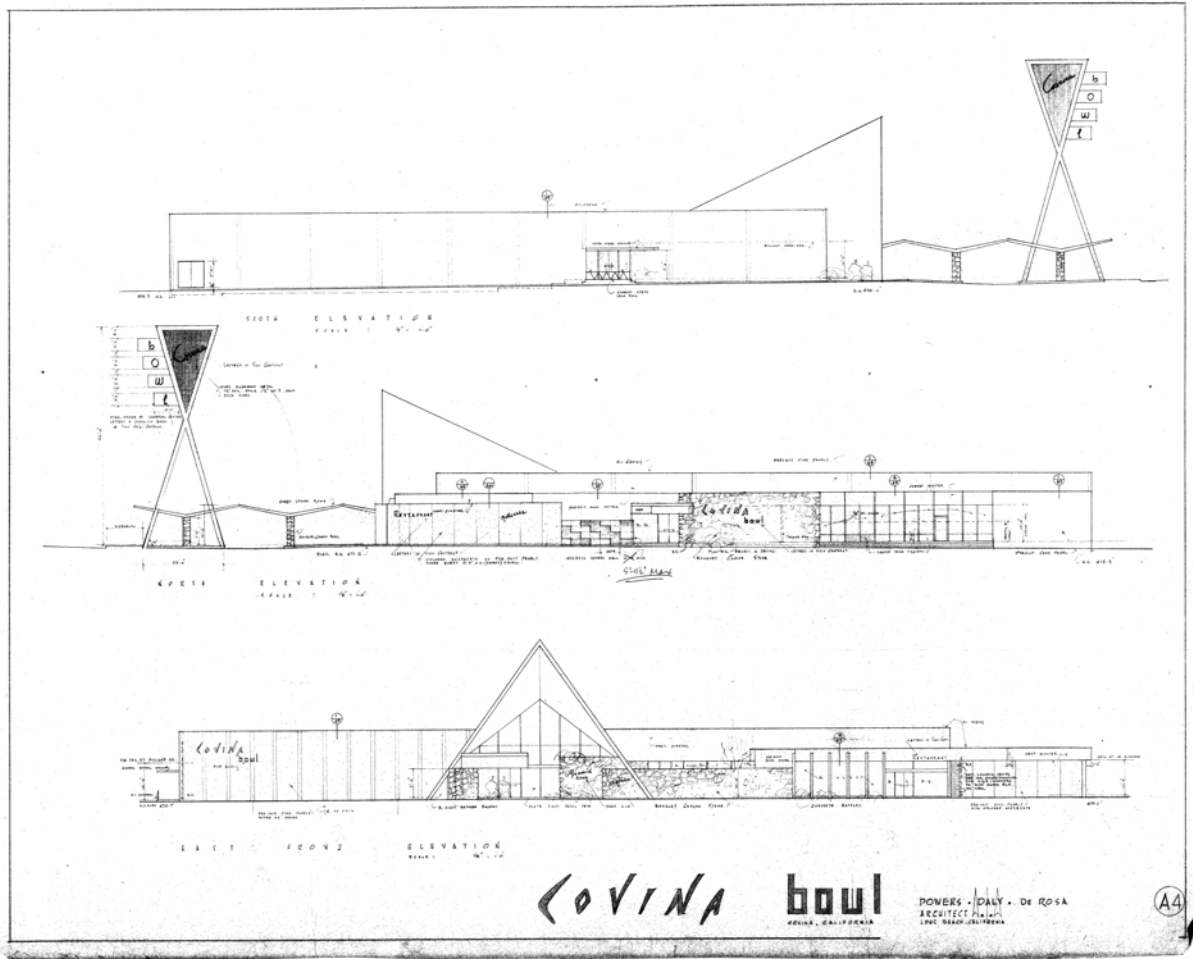
Sketch Map/Photo Key



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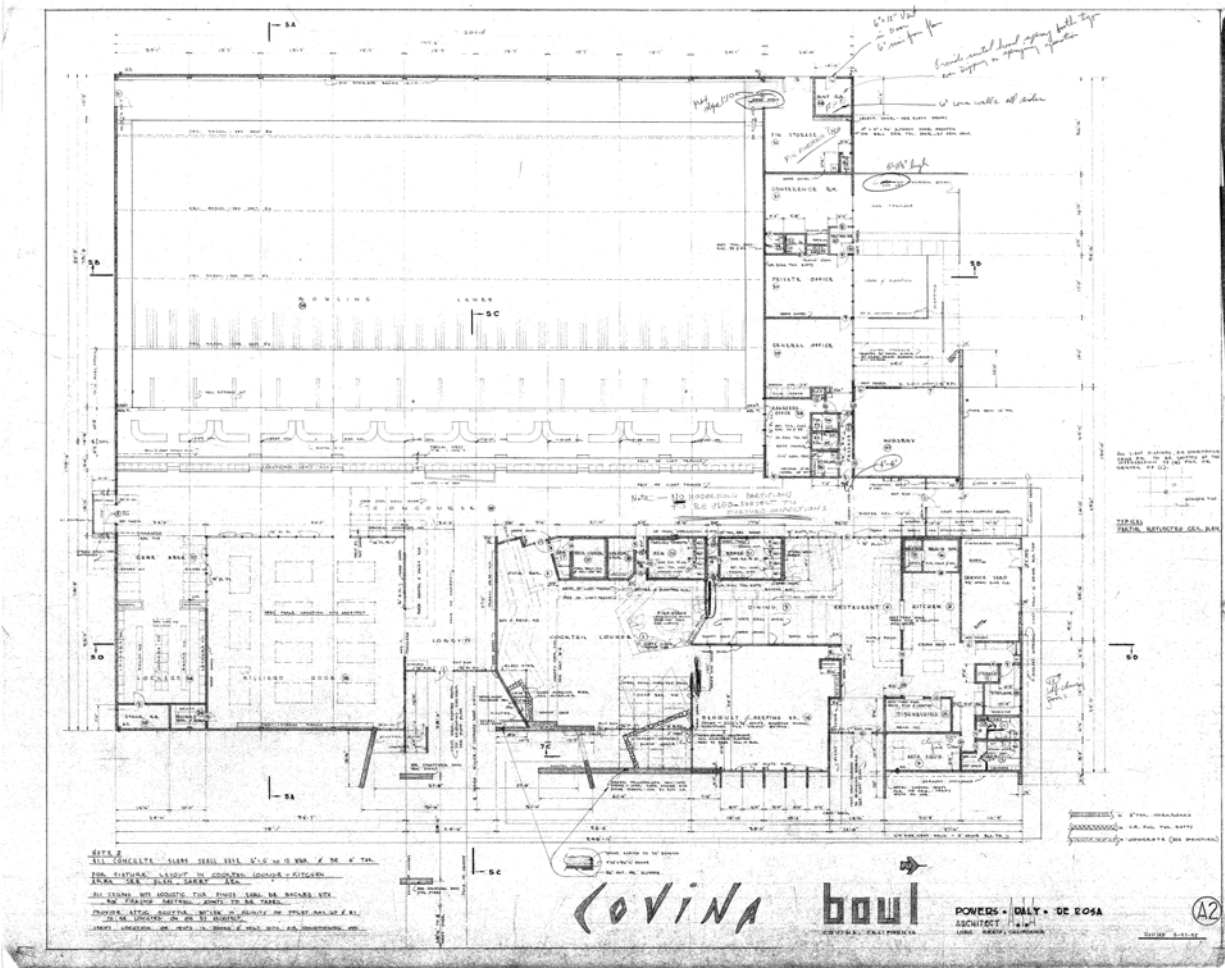
Figure 1 Original elevations, Covina Bowl, 1955. Source: City of Covina.



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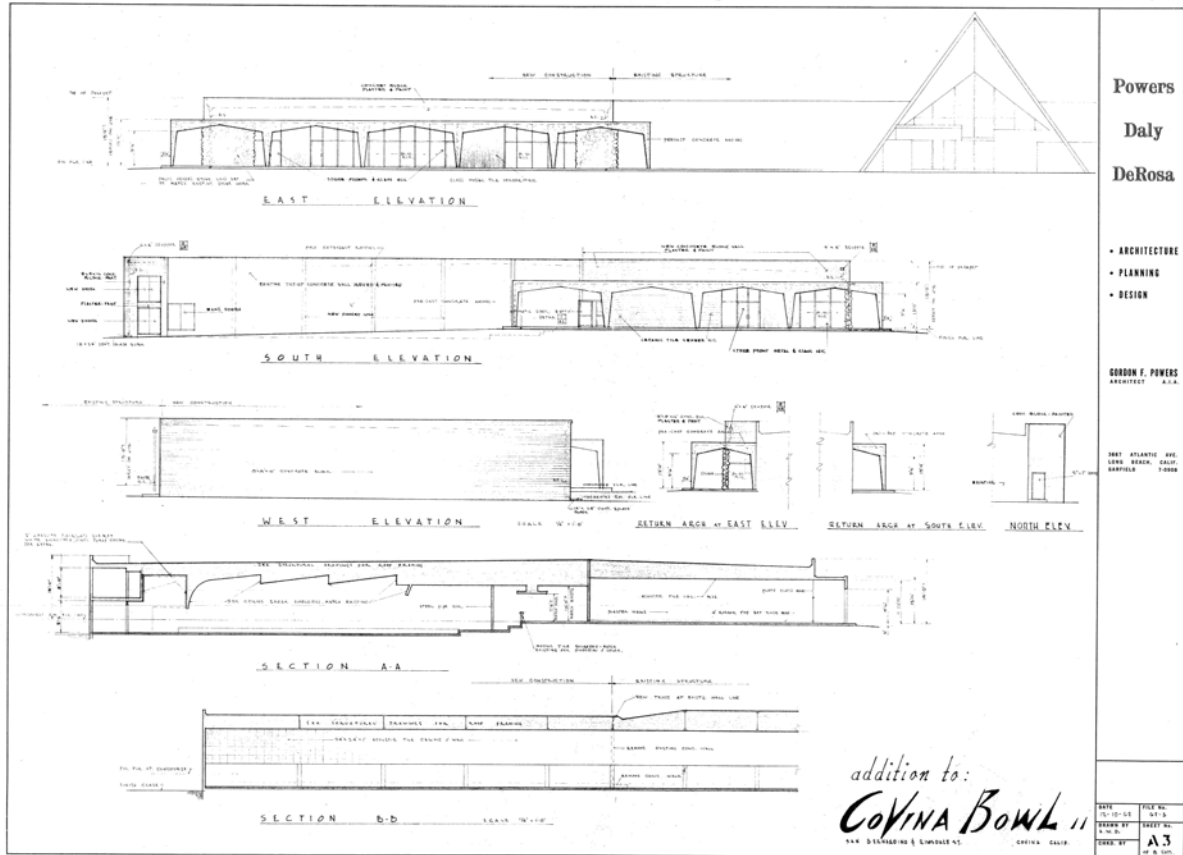
Figure 2 Original plan, Covina Bowl, 1955. Source: City of Covina.



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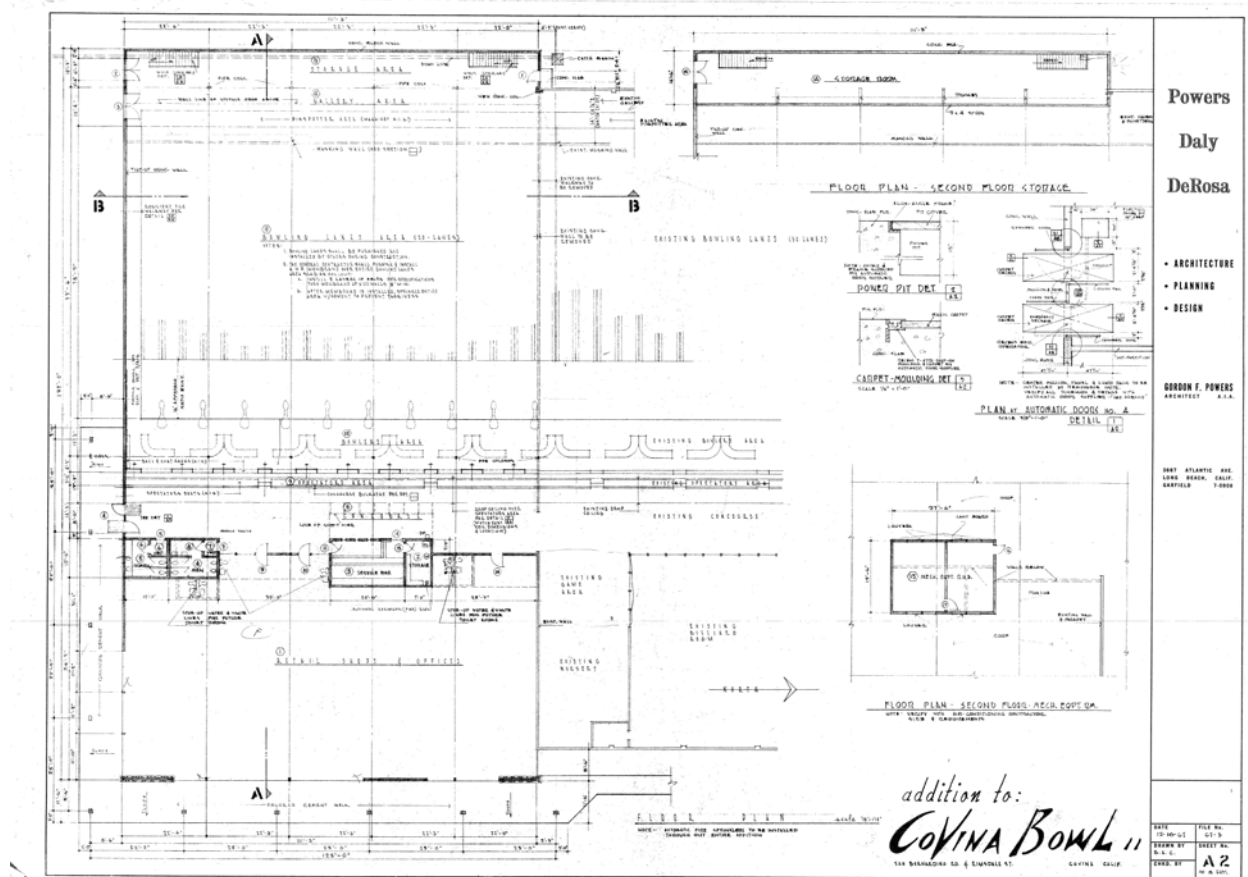
Figure 3 Original elevations, Covina Bowl addition, 1962. Source: City of Covina.



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Figure 4 Original plan, Covina Bowl addition, 1962. Source: City of Covina.



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Figure 5 Covina Bowl, east elevation, 1958. Source: Getty Images.



Figure 6 Postcard, Covina Bowl, east elevation, 1956. Source: Private collection.



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Figure 7 Postcard, Covina Bowl, Pyramid Room, 1956. Source: Private collection.



Figure 8 Postcard, Covina Bowl, Egyptian Room, 1956. Source: Private collection.



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Figure 9 Covina Bowl, east elevation, circa 1957. Source: Charles Phoenix collection.



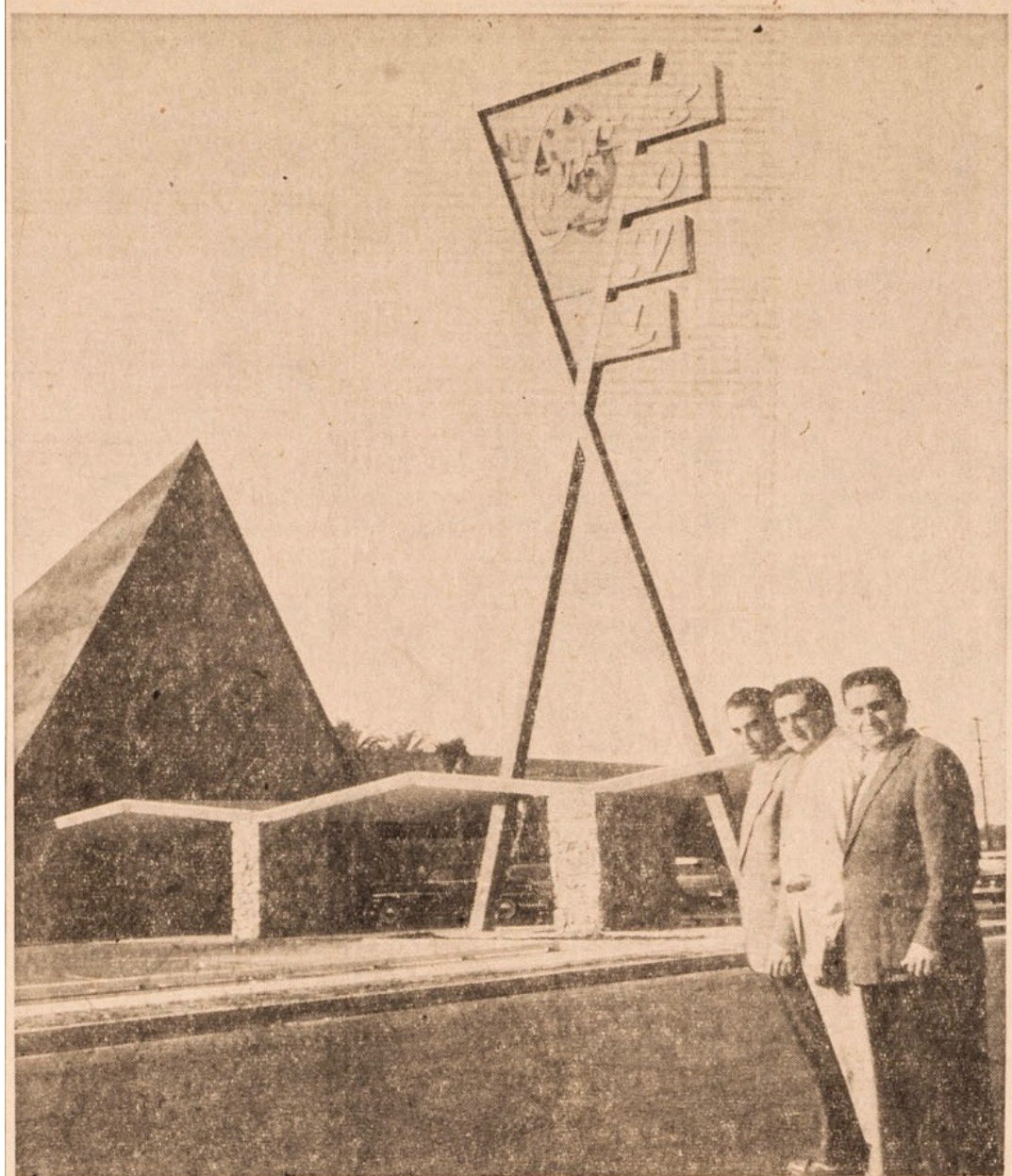
Figure 10 Covina Bowl, east elevation, circa 1958. Source: International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame.



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Figure 11 Brutocao brothers in front of Covina Bowl, 1956. Source: Grand opening insert, *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1956.



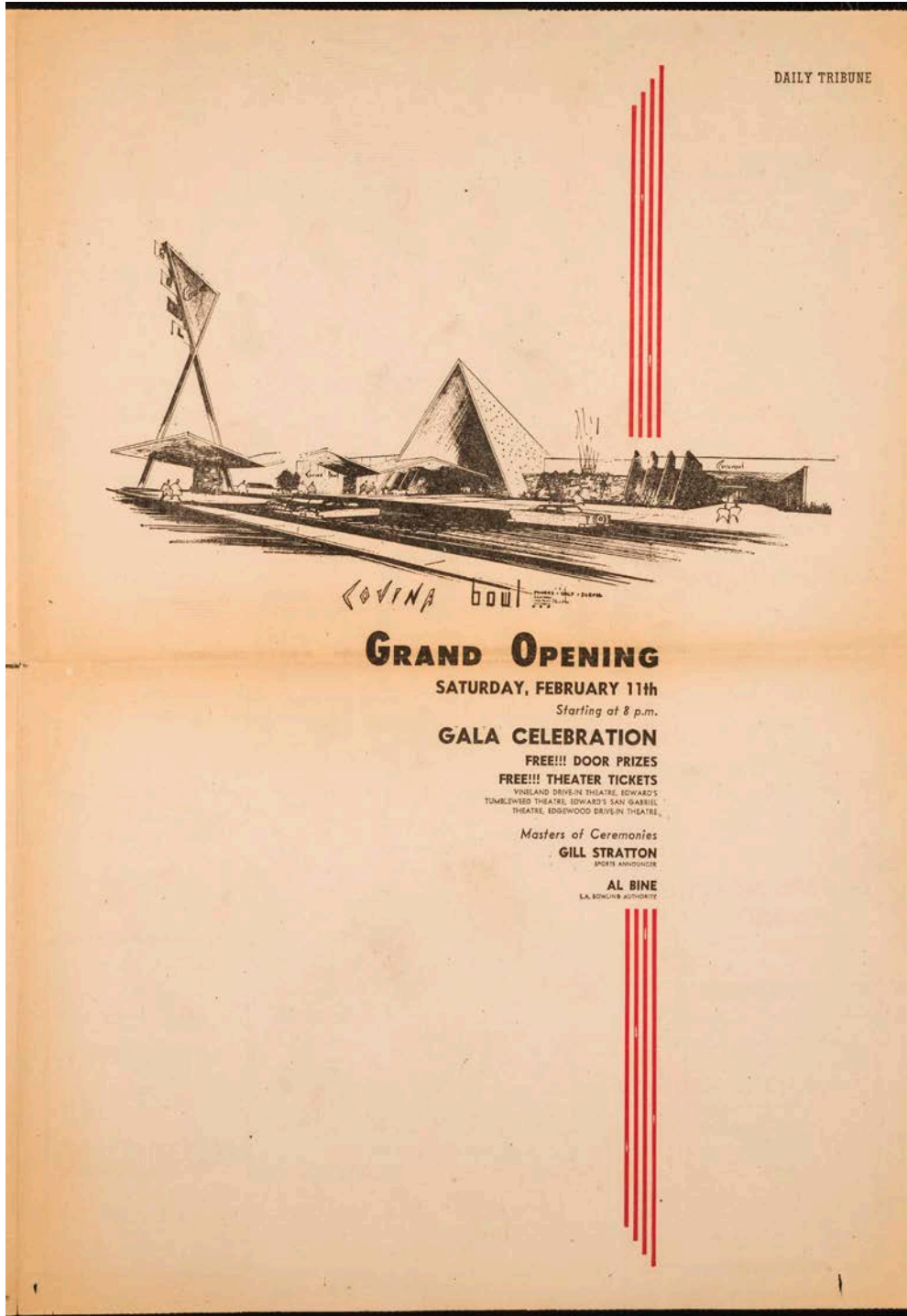
DREAM COME TRUE—The Brutocao brothers, from left to right, Angelo, Leonard and Louis, stand before the entrance of a dream literally come true. The Covina Bowl, 16 months in planning and construction, is one of the Southland's true wonders both in construction and elegance and in facilities offered. The graceful yet massive entrance to the fabulous recreation center reminiscent of the pyramids of old Egypt and the 60 foot sign in a similar motif are destined to become landmarks in the East San Gabriel Valley.

—Daily Tribune Staff Photo

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Figure 12 Front cover, grand opening insert, *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1956.



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Figure 13 Grand opening insert, *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1956.

Fabulous Covina Bowl Will Open Feb. 11

Recreation Center Has No Peer In Southland

The Covina Bowl, a fabulous recreation center whose splendor rivals that of the days of the Egyptian pharaohs from which it takes its architectural motif, will be officially opened next weekend, Feb. 11.

Since 16 months through design, drawing board and construction, the Bowl offers a modernized recreation facility in residence of the East San Gabriel Valley. Sports enthusiasts agree that it is without a peer in the entire Southland and ranked by last few throughout the entire United States.

The enterprise, aptly titled a city within itself, is owned and operated by the Brutowas brothers, Angelo, Leonard and Louis, with views throughout the area to subscribers and participants in other business ventures.

Members of the Valley for the last several years, the Brutowas family is originally from Toronto, Canada. They were successful in the appliance manufacturing business and in the construction field before moving to California and the Southland.

The Brutowas brothers' "dream palace of recreation" is the culmination of a dream nurtured in the architectural firm of Powers-Daly-DeVore of Long Beach about a year and a half ago.

"We want the finest, the ultimate in family recreation facilities for the people of the East San Gabriel Valley," they told the architect.

And, some 16 months later they have exactly that.

The Covina Bowl includes 28 acres of land which includes the swimming, tennis, and other sports areas. It also includes a ballroom, game room, bar, lounge and equipment sales and rental room.

The Bowl also has one of the finest restaurants and cocktail lounges in the area served by an acknowledged kitchen. Banquet and meeting rooms are also available.

Among the social facilities adjacent to the Bowl, one of the most unique features is the 18-hole golf course which is being completed when the main building is completed. The course will be completed in all three by next summer. And a parking lot designed to hold hundreds of cars is also a part of the new recreation site.

Medium Flexibility
Considering the fact that in such a short period of time, the Brutowas brothers have succeeded in obtaining a building permit in this area.

The use of 18-hole concrete with a reinforced concrete floor, steel and reinforced concrete all makes for a permanent type of structure. The design of the Bowl is well suited to the climate of the area and is well adapted to a wide range of uses.

With a heating and cooling system which is both efficient and economical, the Bowl is a year-round recreation center.

The use of the automatic irrigation and drainage system makes for a low maintenance and an added attraction is a great outdoor television screen. The television screen is in operation in the winter time.

Not Enclosed
None of the new building which has been constructed is enclosed. The use of the open building is a feature of the Bowl which is a feature of the Bowl which is a feature of the Bowl.

The Bowl, with its Egyptian theme, is the greatest achievement of the Brutowas brothers. It will be a pleasure to visit and to see the Bowl which has been constructed in this area.

The Bowl is the result of a great deal of planning and is a well thought out recreation center. It is a must for the entire Southland.

Covina Bowl Landscaping Is Unique

Landscaping of the Covina Bowl, the original part of the new recreation center, was planned and executed by the Covina Bowl Landscaping, Inc. of Covina.

The landscape architects have meticulously planned the 28-acre site of the Bowl to provide an outdoor setting for the recreation center. The site is well suited to the climate of the area and is well adapted to a wide range of uses.

Gil Stratton, Al Bine to Emcee Opening Ceremonies

Leading Southern business and sports activities as well as a distinguished member of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Al Bine, will be one of the emcees at the grand opening of the Covina Bowl and Banquet Hall.

The ceremonies are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Feb. 11, 1956, at the Covina Bowl and Banquet Hall, 4122 Azusa Ave., Covina, Calif.

Mr. Bine, 19 years old, has been a member of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce since 1954. He is a member of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Stratton, 19 years old, has been a member of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce since 1954. He is a member of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

Best Wishes to Louis-Angelo-Leonard on the Grand Opening of Your Beautiful New COVINA BOWL

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CONGRATULATIONS . . . BEST OF LUCK COVINA BOWL

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Good Luck . . . Success ON YOUR GRAND OPENING COVINA BOWL for ROOFING of All Kinds . . . Call D. A. BURT ROOFING CONTRACTOR

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MONROVIA

EL. 9-3338 EL. 9-5239

WE ARE HAPPY TO SUPPLY YOU WITH OUR FINE

Tender Tasty MEATS

PROUD MOTHERS—Mrs. Marie Brutowas, mother of the three Brutowas brothers, will be the emcee making the grand opening of the new Covina Bowl and Banquet Hall, 4122 Azusa Ave., Covina, Calif., on Feb. 11, 1956. Mrs. Brutowas will preside over the opening ceremony which will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the new 28-acre recreation center. Mrs. Brutowas will be assisted by her husband, Angelo Brutowas, and her sons, Louis and Leonard Brutowas.

Congratulations AND Best Wishes to COVINA BOWL FROM BEVERLY AND GREEN LANTERN the Antiquist of Ice Cream SERVED EXCLUSIVELY BY COVINA BOWL

Congratulations AND Best Wishes to COVINA BOWL

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Figure 14 Automatic pinspotters, grand opening insert, *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1956.

Bowl's Automatic Pinspotters Are Electronic Miracles

Setting of Pins Done By Machine

One of the marvels of the electronic world is the automatic pinsetter of the American Machine & Foundry Company. It is an integral part of the Covina Bowl's 30 bowling alleys.

The automatic pinsetter is a fully automatic unit for setting lengths, returning the balls, replenishing all the machinery done by hand and all with perfect accuracy.

APC Approved

It is approved by the American Bowling Congress.

Complete and complete of electronic and mechanical equipment since 1930, the American Machine & Foundry Company is engaged in the production of many other automatic machines as well as being heavily engaged in their production. AMF has 10 plants in America, Boston, New Haven, Stamford, N. Y., Providence, Pa., Erie, Pa., Richmond, Va., Lansing, N. Y., Cleveland, Dayton, Hammond, Ind., Joliet, Ill., Chicago, Ontario, Canada and Mexico, Ontario.

How the Pinsetter Works

The AMF Automatic Pinsetter is the first that has been built. It can be installed on regular alleys and will operate perfectly.

Electronic elements and electrical parts throughout the machine are controlled by electronic control. The AMF Automatic Pinsetter is the machine which sets the pins on the alley in a matter of seconds.

The part of the pinsetter which sets the pins is a... (text continues describing the mechanism)

Handles "Oil Spot" Pins

When the first ball has fallen to the alley, the oil spot is... (text continues describing the oil spot mechanism)

Supplementary Equipment

The machine is equipped with supplementary equipment consisting of the Pinsetter, Pinsetter and Pinsetter Pin Detector. The Pinsetter, a... (text continues describing the supplementary equipment)





READY FOR BOWLING—A ball set of pins is in exact position on the alley and while the AMF Pinsetter's setting table continues another set to be spotted at once... (text continues)

HEART OF THE MECHANISM—The pinsetter's... (text continues)

HAZARDING Safety—The AMF Automatic Pinsetter is a... (text continues)

Mr. Pinsetter salutes..



COVINA BOWL

The World's Most Beautiful Bowling Establishment

Bowlers May Now Enjoy "Rhythm Bowling" and The Famous "T" Formation Under the Lane Ball Return

The World's Largest Manufacturer of Bowling Equipment

AMF PINSPOTTERS, INC.
AMF NATIONAL BOWLING and BILLIARD CORP.

Subsidiary of
AMERICAN MACHINE & FOUNDRY COMPANY
 4955 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif.
 Extends Heartiest Congratulations



L. W. MATTSON, West Coast Dist. Mgr.
 NOrmandy 5-5264

..with the amazing
AMF AUTOMATIC PINSPOTTERS...

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Figure 15 Covina Bowl children's nursery, *Los Angeles Examiner*, March 18, 1956.

Covina Bowling Center Sports Nursery

COVINA, March 17. — Opened only since last February, the nation's most lavish and expensive 30-lane bowling establishment—Covina Bowl—will be expanded to 60 lanes before the year is out.

Owners of the handsome \$1,500,000 structure, Leonard, Angelo and Louis Brutacco, Canadian-born contractors and more recently Southern California chicken ranchers, plan to incorporate additional innovations to those already installed.

One of the most novel attractions at the center is a supervised nursery. Here, under the watchful eye of a registered nurse, young children are attended while their parents bowl.

Covina Bowl maintains, too, a staff of trained bowling instructors who provide free lessons in the world's largest participant sport.



SUPERVISED nursery leaves nothing to be desired by the youngster. Toys, games, television—all the amusement facilities to delight a child are available. Above, Nurse Mrs. L. Mallory talks with Angelo Brutacco who with brothers, Leonard and Louis, own Bowl.



LEAGUE LEADERS. Currently on top over nine other teams is the crew above. With ball is Helen Alley. Standing from left are V. Crew, Agnes Becker, Neva Haydon and Eva Haydon. Seated at the score table is Dora Mae King.



"ROLL 'ER" exclaims Lowell Churchill to his son, Allen Lee, 8, whom he is teaching bowling form. When completed bowling center will be largest on Pacific Coast.

—Los Angeles Examiner photo.

CONTAINED in facility beside nursery and bowling lanes, is a 12-table billiard room, restaurant, beauty salon and conference and small meeting rooms.



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Figure 16 Pillarless bowling lanes at Covina Bowl, grand opening insert, *San Gabriel Valley Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1956.

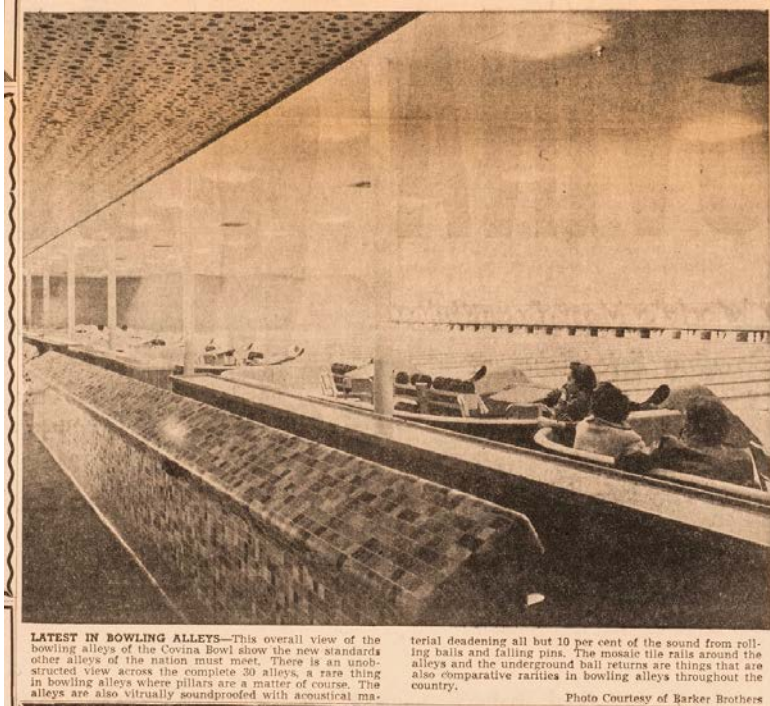
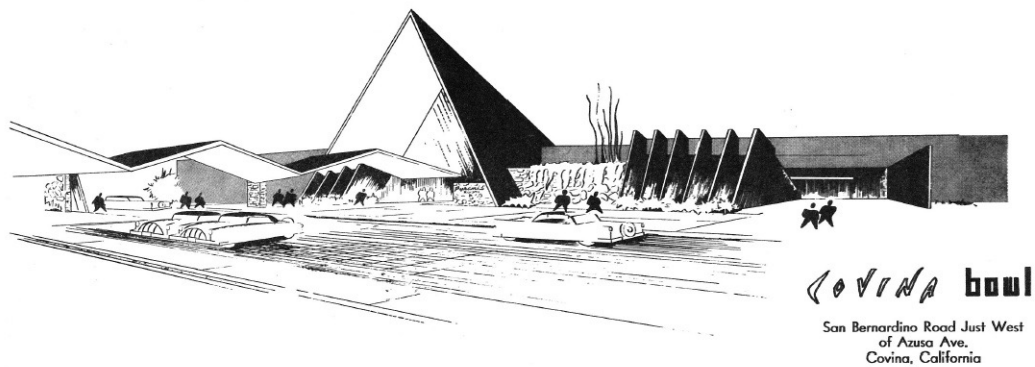


Figure 17 Covina Bowl rendering, 1955. Source: Private collection.



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Figure 18 Powers, Daly and DeRosa feature article. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.



POWERS DALY & DeROSA

Their "epitaph" started a revolution in bowling center design.

By Mort Luby, Jr.

 The observations of veteran proprietors at the grand opening of Covina Bowl in suburban Los Angeles in 1955 were terse and ominous.

"The restaurant is too big. It will lay an egg."

"How could they be so stupid as to put the control counter on the wrong side. The bowlers will steal them blind."

"This will be the prettiest white elephant in the history of the game."

These cynical remarks dumbfounded Gordon F. Powers, Austin W. Daly and Pat B. DeRosa, the young team of architects which created Covina. They had come to Covina's grand opening with the fond hope of hearing accolades for their striking new departure in bowling center design, especially from veteran operators.

Instead, as Daly glumly observed, "This may well be our epitaph."

As it turned out, the prophets of gloom could not have been more wrong. Covina Bowl, a frankly extravagant and unorthodox building, was a healthy money-maker from the day it opened. The "too big" restaurant has managed to show a tidy profit, which is about as rare in a bowling center as a counter clerk with a smile.

Covina Bowl ultimately became the vanguard for the grandiose class of bowling center architecture which is still called, for want of a better label, "California Style."

Proprietors from Passaic to Portland and Miami to Minneapolis soon began to pour down the San Bernardino freeway to see the nonconformist darling of bowling architecture which had been built in a nondescript little suburb some 25 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. New bowling centers springing up in California bore a striking resemblance to Covina Bowl. The soaring, triangular entrance canopy, which had been one of Covina's most striking innovations, became a sort of architectural cliché.

"It was flattering, of course, to see other architects aping our design for Covina," says DeRosa. "I really got sore, however, when I happened to walk into another architect's shop and caught him actually tracing one of our drawings."

For Powers, Daly and DeRosa, Covina Bowl was the beginning of a profitable and exciting relationship with the bowling world. Since 1955, the firm has designed 47 bowling centers which are currently operating. Their brainchildren range in size from 16 to 116 lanes and

are sprinkled across the United States from Pennsylvania to California. For seven years, the firm's little second floor office in Long Beach has been a maze of scale models, working drawings and color renderings of the best looking bowling centers in the nation.

It all began when three Canadian brothers—Leonard, Angelo and Louis Brutocao—contacted P, D & D and explained that they wanted to put up a bowling center in Covina that would be "really different." Not completely versed in the traditional taboos of American proprietors, they insisted on a sizeable restaurant.

With only a few scattershot suggestions from their clients, P, D & D moved quickly. Like most proprietors, the Brutocaos were in a hurry to get their building up and operating. Before the architects were halfway through their working drawings, the foundations were poured and Covina began to take shape.

Considering the relative inexperience of the architects in a new field and the press of time, Covina turned out to be an extremely workable 32 lane plant. Covina's long suite, however, proved to be its dramatic beauty. This was to be

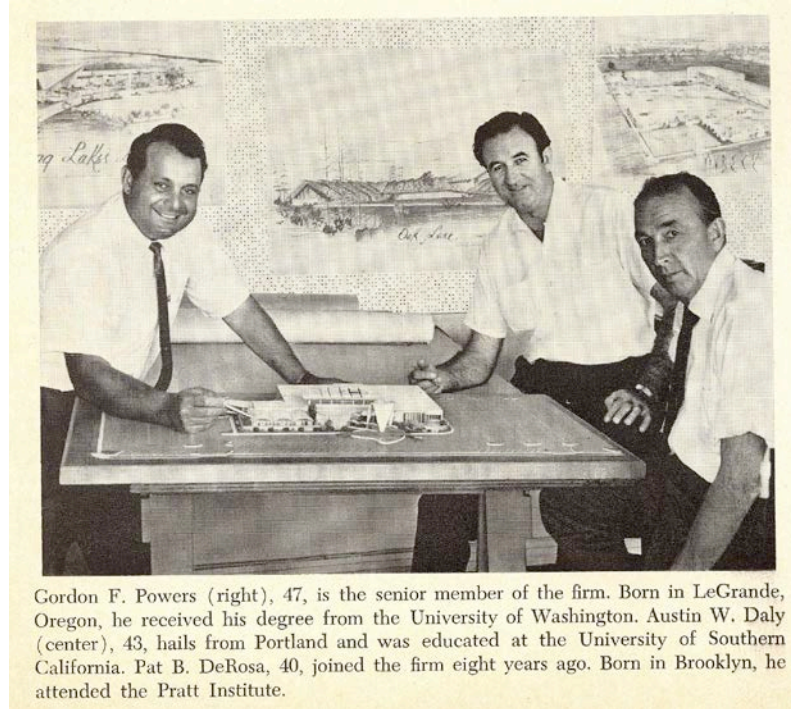
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Gordon Powers (left), Austin Daly (center) and Pat DeRosa show off an artist's design which was used as a motif for one of the bowling center creations.

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Figure 19 Powers, Daly and DeRosa in their architectural office. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.



Gordon F. Powers (right), 47, is the senior member of the firm. Born in LeGrande, Oregon, he received his degree from the University of Washington. Austin W. Daly (center), 43, hails from Portland and was educated at the University of Southern California. Pat B. DeRosa, 40, joined the firm eight years ago. Born in Brooklyn, he attended the Pratt Institute.

Figure 20 Covina Bowl as prototype. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.

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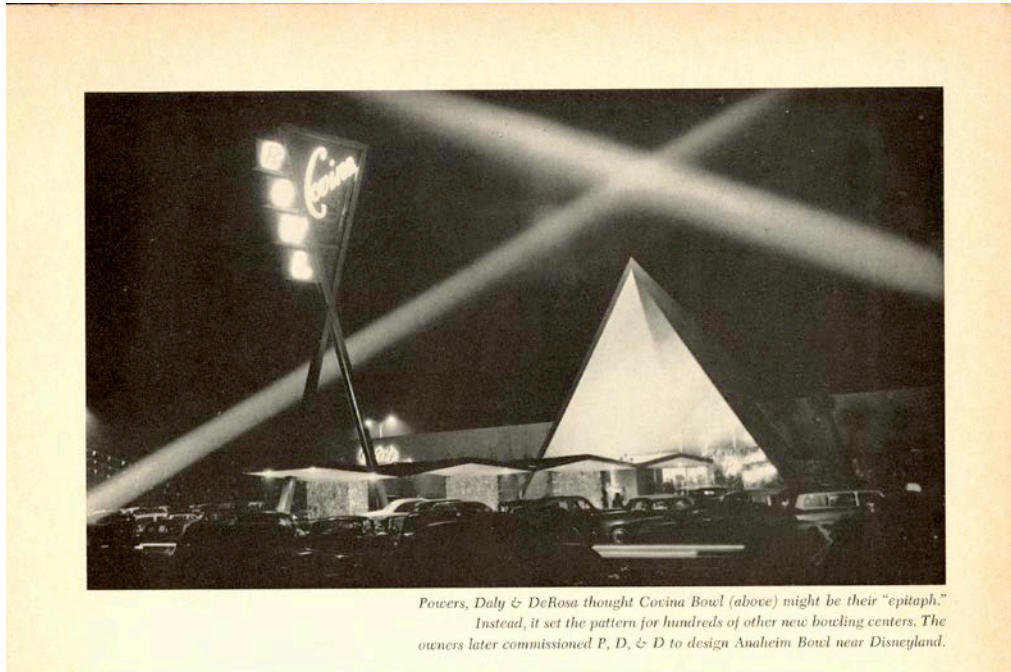


Figure 21 Willow Grove Park Lanes, Pennsylvania, 1960. Design and rendering by Pat DeRosa. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.

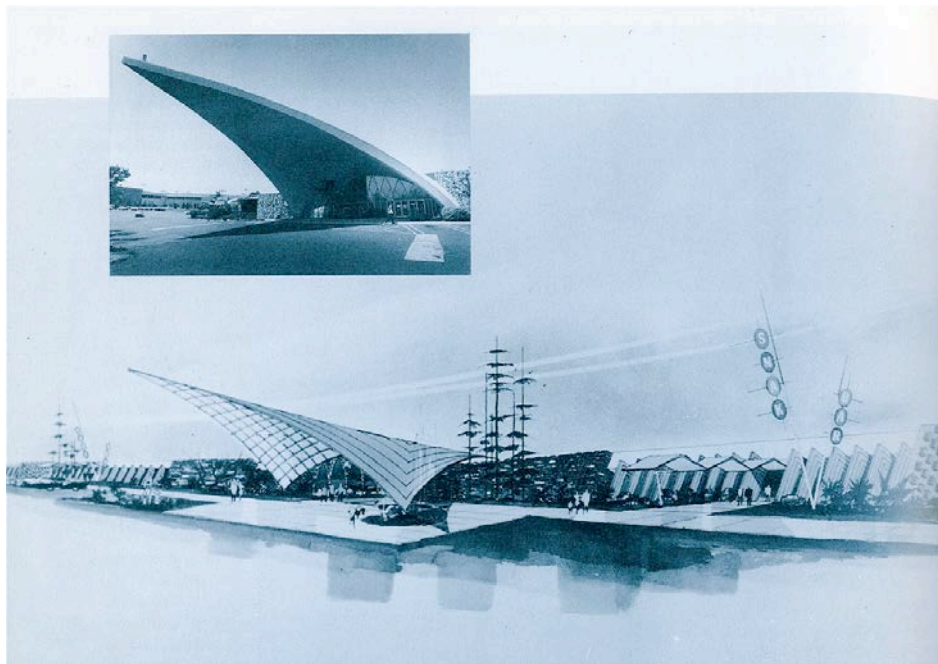


Figure 22 Concrete domes of Futurama Bowl, San Jose, California. 1962. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.

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Figure 23 Java Lanes, Long Beach, California. 1958. Design and rendering by Pat DeRosa. Source: Private collection.



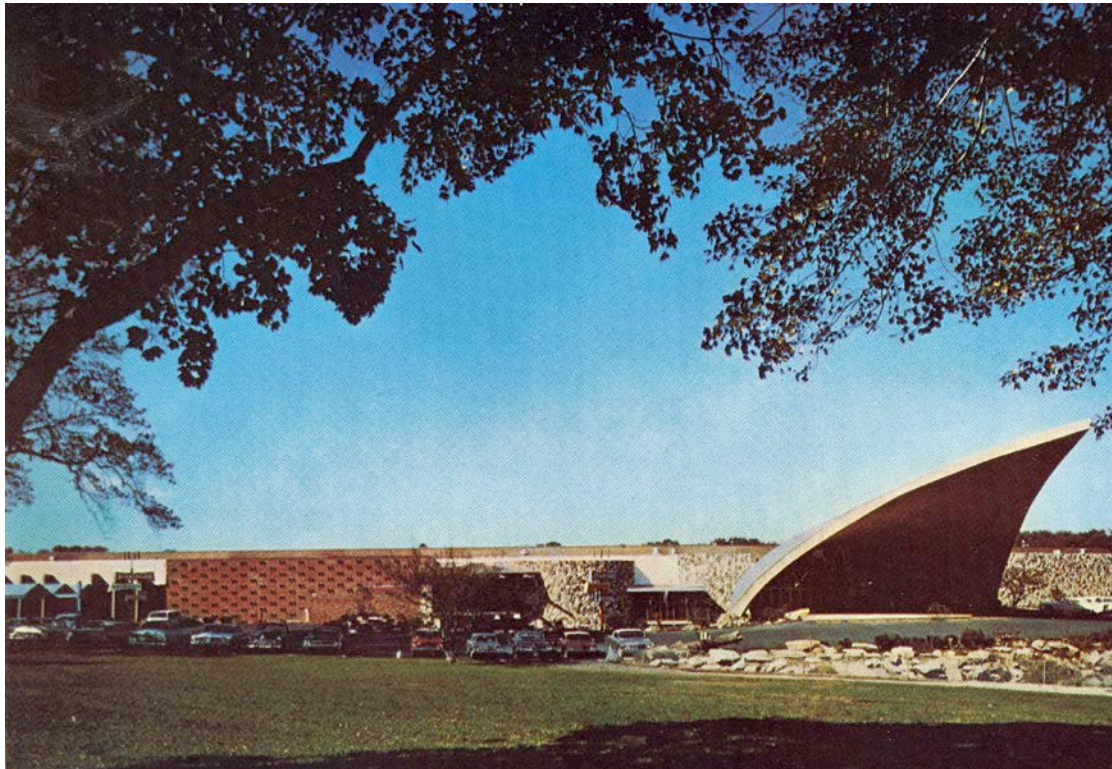
Figure 24 Magic Carpet Room, Futurama Bowl, San Jose, California. 1962. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.

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Figure 25 Willow Grove Park Lanes, Pennsylvania. 1960. Source: *The National Bowlers Journal and Billiard Revue*. Vol. 49, No. 9, September, 1962.



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Figure 26 Plaza Bowl, National City, California. Circa 1958. Source: Private collection.

