

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration FormNATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name University Heights Junior High Schoolother names/site number Eastside Social Services Center; Riverside Historic
Landmark #49

2. Location

street & number 2060 University Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Riverside

N/A vicinity

state Californiacode CAcounty Riversidecode 065zip code 92507

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

California Office of Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

May 17, 1993In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Entered in the
National RegisterDelores Byan6/24/93

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

University Heights Junior High School, Riverside County, CA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: School

Social: Civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

20th Century Revivial/Spanish Colonial
Revival

foundation concrete

walls concrete

roof tile

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See Continuation Sheet.

University Heights Junior High School, Riverside County, CA

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1928

Significant Dates

1928

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Austin, John C.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See Continuation Sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

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 # _____

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property 625 ft x 950 ft = approx. 1.5 acre

UTM References

A

1	1	4	6	7	1	6	0	3	7	5	9	2	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See Continuation Sheet.

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See Continuation Sheet.

☒ See continuation sheet**11. Form Prepared By** Marion Mitchell-Wilson

name/title _____

organization Riverside Development Departmentstreet & number 3900 Main Streetcity or town Riverside,date February 23, 1993telephone 909 782-5584state CAzip code 92522

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Description

University Heights Junior High School is located at 2060 University Avenue between Kansas and Douglass Avenues. The property is comprised of the main school building and a vocational education building which were designed by architect John C. Austin of the Los Angeles firm of Austin & Ashley. The two buildings are set back from the street in an expanse of lawn with mature trees in the northern third of the original fifteen-acre, three-block site. The main school building to the west is an elegant Spanish colonial Revival style, cross-shaped, two-story poured-in-place concrete, tile-roofed structure, on a raised basement which is approached by a wide ceremonial sidewalk on either side of a formal rose garden. The vocational educational building to the east is an unembellished single story, rectangular shaped, poured-in-place concrete, shallow roofed, industrial building at the rear of a tree-shaded parking lot. The buildings were constructed by Cresmer Manufacturing Company with H.G. Lehrbach serving as consulting engineer.

Accentuating the main school building's simplicity and broad horizontal lines is a three-story octagonal tower set between the elaborate front entrance and a north facing cross-wing. The tower, north projecting wing and front of the main axis have a red tile roof. The southern portion of the main axis and the auditorium wing to the south have a flat roof behind a shallow parapet.

The tower, which is situated slightly to the east of the front entrance, is capped with a conical clay tile roof culminating in an art-stone, onion dome-shaped finial. Eight square, ceramic tile panels, inset into the face immediately below the roof line, encircle the tower. Between each of these panels is an art-stone scroll. Directly below each panel is an arched opening which extends to the decorative string-course which surrounds the tower under the tile panels and scrolls. The open third story of the tower is anchored to the base by a string-course at the roof line of the main building. This string-course is pierced by a small window embellished by a sculptured art-stone surround. The tower is unified with the main facade by an additional string-course at the second story level. This band is interrupted by a ten-light arched window at the second level. The entire tower is anchored by a simple six-panel rectangular window on the first floor level.

The facade is unified by repeating many of the tower details in the two-story front entrance. Here, art-stone and plaster cast work sculpted in a simplified Churrigueresque-style, surround the structure's large double, glass-door entry which is capped by a glass fanlight. Deeply recessed within the front facade, these doors are sheltered by a sculptured arch with a decorative keystone and flanked by two massive Corinthian columns on piers. The columns appear to support the second story of the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 7 Page 2

Description

entrance with its arched window flanked by pilasters which, in turn, support the broken pediment over the window. A large art-stone panel above the pediment at the roof line serves as a final embellishment to the entrance.

In comparison with the ornamentation on the tower and front entrance, the remainder of the front facade is simple and refined. Thirty-two vertical, steel casement windows, approximately nine feet high and underscored by a projecting sill, define the first and second stories. Only the north-projecting wing has the added details of large, arched fanlight windows on the first floor, and the continuation of the second string-course from the tower and entry.

Simplified versions of the front entrance are repeated in the east and west entrances. Like the front entrance, these entrances contain arched, multi-paned, fanlight doors, set in a cast stone surround, supported by pillars which rise from the top of the stairs. The sculptured surrounds support an embellished rectangular window crowned by a broken pediment similar to that over the front entrance. Three narrow, multistory, arched windows which are a slender version of those found on the walls of the north-facing wing, are placed in ascending order to correspond to the rise of the interior stairwells at the east and west wings of the building.

The cross pattern of the University Heights Junior High School is completed by a flat-roofed, rectangle, auditorium wing extending south from the rear of the structure and ending with a two-story flyway. On both the east and west sides of this wing are four large rectangular windows, slightly curved at the top, and set within four bays, defined by pilasters rising the full height of the building and capped by an art-stone scroll like those on the tower. Both the east and west facades of the auditorium are unified by a string-course that runs just below the scrolls. Two entry doors are located at the stage end on both the east and west sides of the auditorium wing.

The interior of the University Heights school structure remains true to the original Austin design. The first floor housed six classrooms, each 27 x 31 feet; a commercial room, 33 x 23 feet; a library with its tall ceiling and three walls of windows in the north-projecting wing; and an administration office with a huge walk-in safe. The auditorium, complete with projection center and band room, is described as 88-feet-long and 50-feet-wide, with a 28 x 50-foot balcony and a 28 x 44-foot stage. The second floor of the school contained classrooms plus music, sewing, and art rooms, and a large science laboratory with an adjoining lecture room. The area above the north-facing library served as the school's "home science" and cooking room. All science classes, including the home science area, had attached storage rooms equipped with sinks and drain boards. A wide hallway with a poured concrete floor ran the length of the school on both the first and second floors. Six hundred lockers lined these halls and were set

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CASection number 7 Page 3

Description

between tall classroom doors with transom windows. Inside each classroom, the nine-foot-tall windows lined one wall while huge blackboards lined the three interior-facing walls. The hallways are also unchanged with their scored concrete slab floors and rows of lockers. The original nature of the school is also reflected in the bathrooms, many of which contain their original fixtures scaled to a child's height. Other reminders of the structure's original purpose are evident in the retention of the sink areas associated with the science laboratory and home science rooms, as well as the huge walk-in safe located in the administration office.

Today, the former University Heights Junior High School serves as a social services center within the Bobby Bonds Park and Sports Complex. In addition to serving as a community center, an active adaptive reuse program has resulted in this structure also serving as office space for a wide variety of nonprofit organizations. Rooms which once served as classrooms and which are now used as office space, have retained their broad expanse of windows, original blackboards and, although now carpeted, original wooden floors. Changes to the school's interior were made in 1966 when a new fire alarm and sprinkler system were installed in accordance with requirements of the state fire marshal. On the school's exterior, a handicapped access ramp has been added to the east entryway. Although this ramp fills approximately half of the entry step area, its slope extends along the face of the structure and does not block the decorative side entrance. In addition, narrow pipe guardrails are used to minimize the ramp's visual impact. Changes to the north-projecting, old library wing and south-projecting auditorium wing, are minimal. The library wing now serves as a community meeting room and the interior of the auditorium remains in its original state with its stage, projection room, and rows of seating. The exterior of the auditorium, however, has experienced minor reversible modifications: metal fire doors have replaced the original mullion doors on the east and west side entrances to the stage area. In addition, security devices in the form of heavy wire security screens have been added to the windows of the rear area. Although changes have been made to this structure, most are reversible and their impact on the integrity of the school's character-defining elements are inconsequential.

The former vocational education building is a rectangular, single-story concrete building with a shallow cross-gabled roof with skylights. The principal facade has a single door center entrance with a projecting aluminum awning. A band of large, horizontal, multi-paned, metal-casement windows are symmetrically spaced in sets of two triple and one double section on either side of the entrance. The triple windows contain vertical lights in a two-four-two pattern; the double windows have vertical lights in a two-two pattern. The rear facade is similar to the front with the exception of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetUniversity Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CASection number 7 Page 4

Description

center door. The end facades have two large double doors separated by two large almost square windows with four vertical lights each. The upper portion of all of the windows and the double doors on the end facades has been covered over by wood paneling. The building is located to the southeast of the main school building and now houses a Head Start school. It has been severely altered over time and no longer retains its architectural integrity or ability to convey its historic sense of time and place

The University Heights Junior High School and vocational education buildings are now part of a complex of seven structures: the former school and vocational education buildings, plus a gymnasium, rest rooms and snack shop, large swimming pool, tennis courts and a ball diamond with wooden bleachers, which occupy the entire city block which was the original site.

Only the school and the former vocational education building were part of the original Austin plan. Therefore, it has not been considered a contributor to this nomination. Later, non historic buildings on the site include the gymnasium, constructed in 1951 by Prichard & Sons, Inc., and designed by architect Bolton C. Moise, Jr. Today it continues in its original function while also serving as a day care center. Because of a lack of assembly area, this gymnasium was remodeled in 1969. A large swimming pool was later added to the south, as were a tennis court, snack shop and new ball diamond with wood bleachers.

Of the structures on the original University Heights Junior High School site, only the main school building is a contributor to this nomination. Although adapted for use as a community center in 1974, the building retains a high degree of architectural and site integrity, and still conveys its original sense of time and place. The more recent structures are not detractors to the integrity of the main building or the property as they are located behind the main school building and can not be seen from the main street. Only the vocational education building is visible from the front of the historic structure and the main thoroughfare, and it is some distance from the main building. The vocational building has been adapted for use as a preschool. Door and window conversions, resurfacing and the gutting of the interior have severely altered this building and compromised its historical integrity. Although it lacks historic architectural integrity and no longer contributes to the significance of the property, the vocational education building has been included in the boundaries as a non contributor due to its historic importance. Although the original property purchased for University Heights Junior High School was three blocks of orange groves, the groves were destroyed with the development of the school and playing fields. While the southern two thirds of the original site behind the school building was intensely developed as part of the community center conversion and no longer retains its integrity, the northern third,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 7 Page 5

Description

containing the main school building and vocational education building, still conveys its historic design. For this reason, the property boundary has been drawn to include only the northern third containing the historic structures and their setting.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance

The University Junior High School is significant at the local level under criterion A, as the most intact of the three earliest gender integrated junior high schools associated with the progressive movement in Riverside; and under criterion C, as an important example of the dominance of the Spanish Colonial Revival-style of architecture in Riverside during the first thirty years of this century, its relationship to the progressive era in Riverside, and the City's interest in establishing "Hispanic Revival" architecture as the comprehensive architectural theme for its major public buildings. It is also the only remaining example of architecture by noted architect John C. Austin in the city.

Efforts toward the creation of a junior high school system began in Riverside as early as 1912, when Superintendent of Schools, Arthur N. Wheelock, joined the progressive reorganization movement sweeping the American educational system. Concurrent with the movement that lead, in 1914, to the establishment of the state's first junior high school in Berkeley, California, Wheelock introduced a similar system to the City of Riverside. However, he only separated out grades seven through nine from the high school level. Although innovative in its educational philosophy, this early junior high system continued to maintain the City's gender segregation policy. As a result, classes for junior high aged girls were held in the old Girl's High School (demolished) located at the junction of Ninth and Lime streets, while classes for the boys were held in the Grant Elementary School (extant) located at Fourteenth and Brockton.

It was not until the construction of the University Heights, Chemawa, and Central Junior High Schools that the progressive era reform of gender integration was realized. University Heights Junior High is the only intact example of this important developmental phase of educational theory and building in Riverside. The construction of these schools was the result of community rumblings in favor of coeducation, and in 1921, the Board of Education gave notice that coeducation, would be on the ballot for the November general election. By 1922, bonds totaling \$1,300,000 had been approved by the voters for the creation of a new coeducational system in the City of Riverside. With the gender integration deadline set for 1924, Riverside responded with plans for the construction three new junior high schools.

Construction of the three new, gender-integrated junior high schools began with University Heights in 1926. Drawing upon \$175,000 for the total 1922 bond issue, the school district purchased fifteen acres of orange grove property which had formerly served as investment property for the widow of Robert Lewis Stevenson, Mrs. Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson. On October 15, 1928, all three junior high schools opened: Chemawa, on the site of the Chemawa Park and polo grounds; Central on Magnolia

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 8 Page 2

Statement of Significance

Avenue at Terracina Drive; and University Heights at Eighth (now University) and Kansas Avenues. Of these only University Heights remains intact and continues to convey its historical design.

Designed to meet the needs of up to 640 students, the newly constructed University Heights Junior High School was proclaimed an immediate success. Combining dignity with serviceability, this school "rivalled colleges in its equipment and provisions." Like the other two junior highs, University Heights contained a large auditorium with a stage, special lighting arrangements, and a projection room. Special rooms for both science and domestic science courses offered the latest innovation: sinks with drain boards to replace the former washbowls. Other features included seventeen standard classrooms, large and spacious hallways lined with metal lockers, a library, a cafeteria, a drawing room, and a separate vocational education building.

The importance of University Heights Junior High School in the development of educational theory continued after World War II. Between 1950 and 1956, under the stewardship of Principal Herman Gruhn, University Heights Junior High became a testing ground for the nation's latest educational theories. Many of these theories had been developed by Gruhn's brother, William T. Gruhn, who was one of four nationally recognized leaders of the junior high movement following World War II. Unlike the earlier theories of the progressive era which stressed the efficiency and scientific advantages of the junior high system, the theories presented by W.T. Gruhn focused on the psychology of adolescence and emphasized the special needs arising from physical changes of youth. In the fall of 1968, University Heights Junior High School became the district's first middle school, when ninth grade students were moved to the North High School campus. Four years later, the school district began construction of a new school, the University Heights Middle School on Massachusetts Avenue. This move came in response to a 1972 building inspection which determined that the original (1928) University Heights Junior High School was unsafe under the Field Act earthquake safety standards. From 1972 until 1974, the school district continued to use the original University Heights Junior High for its adult education program. In 1974, however, the school district sold the building and property to the City for \$300,000, who, in turn, created the Bobby Bonds Park and Sports Complex. The sports complex was named for Bobby Lee Bonds, who was a Major League baseball player in the late 1960s.

University Heights Junior High School's is significant under criterion C as an outstanding example of a Spanish Colonial Revival designed secondary education building in the community of Riverside in the 1920's; and as the only intact one of the three Spanish Colonial Revival Junior High Schools designed by John C. Austin and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 8 Page 3

Statement of Significance

influenced by Charles Cheney's cohesive recreational and design plan for the City of Riverside. Both acclaimed masters in their respective and related fields, in selecting them the City of Riverside exercised its continuing policy of hiring only the most respected design talent to help shape their vision of the City. University Heights Junior High School is the only example of that vision realized in a secondary educational facility which still retains both its site and architectural integrity.

Because of the climate and the conquest of the region by Spain beginning in the sixteenth century, the style, loosely called Spanish Colonial, Spanish Revival or Spanish Eclectic, and which later divided into the Mission Revival and Mediterranean styles, has long been associated with Southern California structures. By the time these schools were built, the Mediterranean style, with its Italian and Islamic features had found favor. In general, the architects of this period, 1910 to the early 1930s, were among the first generation of American architects to be trained and influenced in Europe, especially by the Beaux-Arts tradition. By the early 1920s, neither the elegant serenity of the Arts and Crafts movement nor the romantic simplicity of the Mission style could fully satisfy the desire for ornamentation and opulence. The wealthy of this era had opportunities to travel and see European historical styles and began to demand authenticity rather than the simple interpretations which characterized the earlier Mission period. The architects' response to the increasing sophistication was to combine the Mission tradition with Mediterranean details.

By the 1920s, Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean architecture had become wildly popular in burgeoning Southern California. In the fantasy world of "Hollywood," town promoters and developers began to think in terms of unified designs which would represent Southern California. A sort of Spanish Eclectic styling was the choice of planned communities from Santa Barbara to San Diego. Riverside was not immune to these pressures. It was one of the first cities to experiment with Mission and Mediterranean styles on a grand scale and continued using that style for its public architecture after many communities had begun to favor other styles.

This experiment began with Frank Miller's Mission Inn, and the First Church of Christ Scientist. Riverside's coordinated urban planning vision began in 1915, was centered along Seventh Street and continued until the Depression. The City joined the movement and adopted the promotional slogan "California's City Beautiful". The City Board and new planning commission established a policy of hiring only the most important names in architecture and planning to help them develop their community as a Mediterranean paradise. Architects and landscape architects such as Arthur Benton, Myron Hunt, Julia Morgan, and the Olmsted Brothers were hired. Existing structures were remodeled to blend with new ones built in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetUniversity Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CASection number 8 Page 4

Statement of Significance

Although the city had been moving in the direction of a coordinated architectural style since Arthur Benton's poetic monograph on the Mission Inn and his introduction of Mission Revival architecture to the community in the first decade of the century, its vision of a coordinated architectural style was not formally defined until 1929. After months of work, in that year, city planning authority, Charles H. Cheney, published such a vision in Riverside's first Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Through civic cooperation, Cheney envisioned the school system serving as a vital visual and social link for a rapidly expanding and diverse community specifically in the area of parks and recreation. Concurrently with hiring Cheney, the City sought an architect to design the schools funded by the recent bond act. It is understandable, given the architectural context developing within the community at the time, that they would lean towards the Spanish Revival style for this major undertaking. Continuing their previous course, they selected the acclaimed John C. Austin to design the new junior high schools in this popular style. Austin had recently redesigned the entrance facade to St. Vibiana's Cathedral in Los Angeles to more accurately represent its model, San Miguel del Mar in Barcelona. Cheney commented on the appropriateness of Austin's Spanish Colonial Revival design for the University Heights Junior High School, which was completed one year prior to the formal publication of his report. He called Austin's work "a splendid addition to the City system" in a showplace position along one of Riverside's main arteries (Cheney Report). Cheney also recommended the joint planning effort between the parks and school departments that resulted in the large playing fields and recreational opportunities which the three block site of University Heights Junior High School provided (Cheney Report). Austin's University Heights Junior High School is the only intact junior high school from this important architectural and community planning period in Riverside's development. After completing his impressive commission for Riverside, Austin went on to design several other Los Angeles area schools in the same style including the Venice and Monrovia High schools. He became popularly known as the schools' architect.

Austin's use of the Spanish Colonial Revival style at University Heights and Cheney's recommendation for larger play ground areas seems to have also influenced the design of the smaller elementary schools of the era. Local architect G. Stanley Wilson, designed the Palm Elementary School (1927) at about the same time. Although in the Italian Renaissance style with gothic details, it, too, had a deep set back and a large playing field. And, Wilson returned to the Spanish Colonial Revival style in 1935 when he designed the Grant Elementary School.

University Heights Junior High School, with its sports, plays, and P.T.A., served as a focal point for the surrounding community. From the time of the original proposal of

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 8 Page 5

Statement of Significance

the construction site, residents of the surrounding community actively participated in the school's future development. To members of the University Heights Improvement Association, construction of the school brought many benefits, including the paving of East Eighth Street (University Avenue), the possibility of new residents drawn by a fine school system, an auditorium with seating for 600 as an ideal place for community meetings and plays, and "a beautiful structure adding much to the appearance of Eighth Street" (Riverside Enterprise, 4/21/28).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 9 Page 1

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 9 Page 2

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"Permit Issued for Junior High." RDP, 29 April 1927.

"Boys Junior High Notes." RDP, 5 April 1927.

"Dr. Barrett Tells of Junior School-University Heights Association Hears of New Building." RDP, 16 March 1927.

"Want Junior High in Heights Section." RE, 3 February 1926.

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

Section number 2 Page 3

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Hartford, Conn.

Interviews November, 1990 by Duncan-Abrams

Finley Bown, University Heights Junior High School Principal, interim, aspiring 1968.

Edna Lockhart, Director of Attendance and Child Welfare, Riverside Unified School
District, 1942-1974.

Walter Parks, Building and Facilities Administrator, Riverside Unified School District
(Ret).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

University Heights Junior High School
Riverside County, CA

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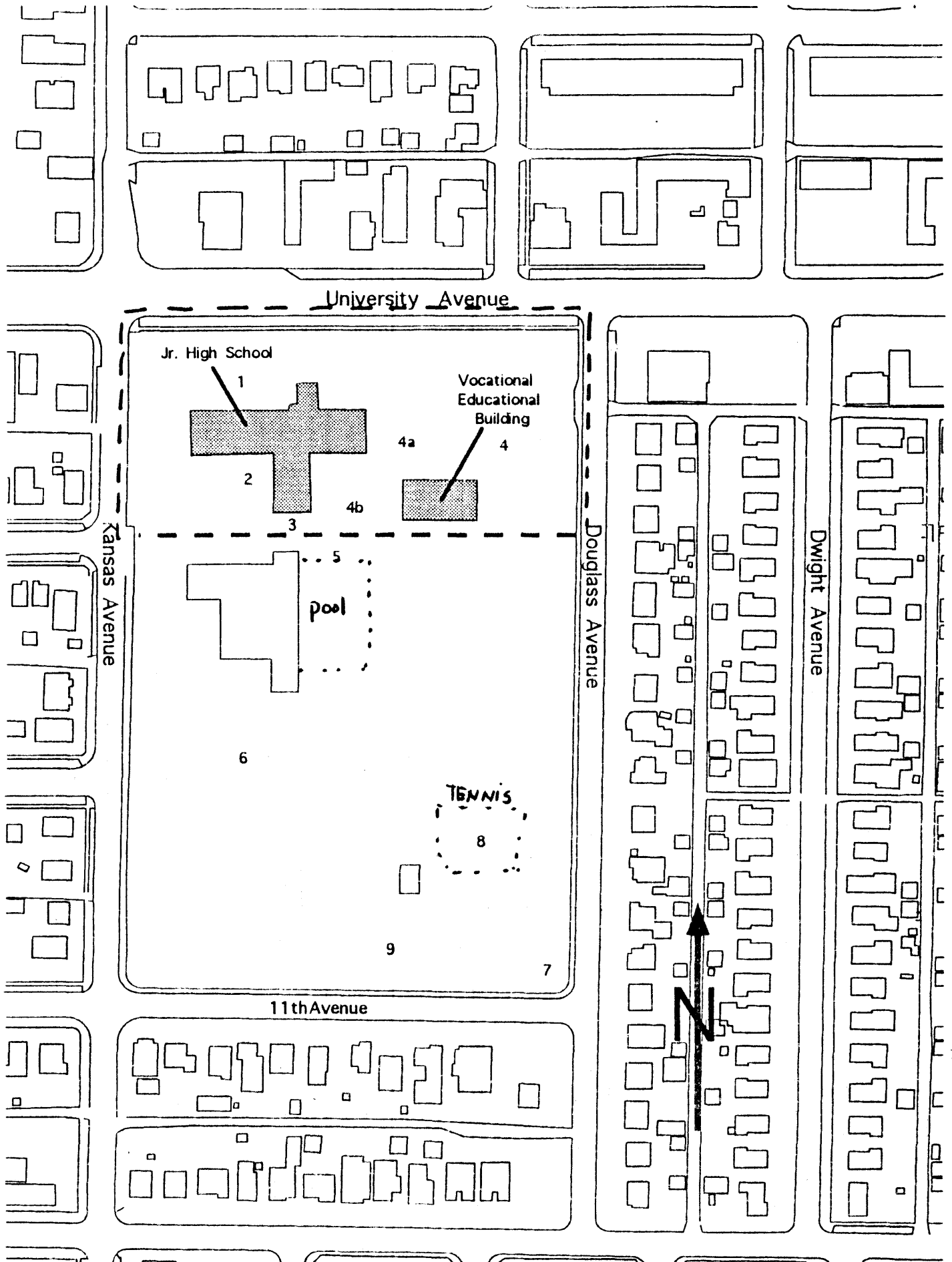
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Verbal Boundary Description

The University Heights Junior High School and vocational education building are located at 2060 University Avenue., Riverside, California. They sit in the northern third of the original three-block site bound by University Avenue on the north, 11th Street on the south, Kansas Avenue on the west and Douglass Avenue on the east. The northern boundary of the nominated site is University, the eastern is Douglass, and the western is Kansas. The southern boundary runs between the school and vocational education building, and the newer gymnasium and sports complex, from Kansas to Douglass, parallel to University.

Boundary Justification

The northern, eastern and western boundaries of the National Register nomination for University Heights Junior High School, described above, are based on the street boundaries of the original grove site sold by Mrs. Robert Lewis Stevenson for the school complex. However, due to the development of the southern two-thirds of the site since the 1950s as a sports complex, the southern boundary line of the nomination has been drawn immediately behind the school and vocational education building, between them and the 1951 gymnasium.



University Heights Junior High School
2060 University Avenue.

Scale 1 inch = 100 ft.