

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

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 3CS, 5S3

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Page 1 of 3

*Resource Name or #: Helgeson Buick

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: Riverside

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: Riverside West

Date: May 17, 2012

c. Address: 8001 Auto Drive

City: Riverside

Zip: 92504

e. Other Locational Data: APN 231-240-002-2

*P3a. **Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)
This property is located on the northwest corner of Auto Drive and Detroit Drive, and contains a one-story automobile showroom originally constructed for Helgeson Buick in 1965. It exhibits characteristics of the International Style. The building is oriented diagonally on the parcel. It is rectangular in plan and composed of discrete volumes, with steel frame construction and a flat roof. The central volume is slightly taller than the other volumes, and consists of floor-to-ceiling storefront windows on three sides that give it a transparent appearance. The primary entrance is a single, fully-glazed, metal frame door. There are four rectangular volumes projecting from the central showroom. On the primary (south) façade there is a flat-roofed entrance canopy. On the west façade there is an open, flat-roofed carport used to display automobiles. On the east and rear façades there are enclosed office spaces clad in stack bond brick. The eastern wall of the east volume rises above the roofline creating a parapet. There is an addition on the north.

*P3b. **Resource Attributes:** HP6 – 1-3 story commercial building

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

P5a. Photo or Drawing



*P5b. **Description of Photo:** (View, date, accession #) View looking Northwest (March 2013)

*P6. **Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** Historic

Prehistoric Both
1965, building permit

*P7. **Owner and Address:**

*P8. **Recorded by:**
Historic Resources Group
12 S Fair Oaks Ave, Ste 200
Pasadena, CA 91105

*P9. **Date Recorded:**
March 20, 2013

*P10. **Survey Type:**
Intensive

*P11. **Report Citation:** (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, *City of Riverside Modernism Context Statement*, November 2009.

Historic Resources Group, *Citywide Modernism Intensive Survey*, September 2013.

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

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # Helgeson Buick

B1. Historic Name: Helgeson Buick

B2. Common Name: None

B3. Original Use: Commercial/auto

B4. Present Use: Vacant/not in use

***B5. Architectural Style:** Mid-Century Modern/International

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Original three structures, noted on building permits as “A”, “B”, and “C” buildings, completed in 1965. Roof addition (15x66 feet) to unspecified building added in 1990. Spray booth added in 2003. Roof of original structure replaced in 2005. New building for Acura dealership completed in 2005. The smallest of the three original structures (“B” building) was demolished in 2006. Awnings on “C” building at rear of site demolished in 2006. Rear portion (2825 ft²) of main building at southeast corner of site (“A” building) demolished in 2012. Remaining structure was sealed off with a masonry wall.

***B7. Moved?** No Yes Unknown **Date:**

Original Location:

***B8. Related Features:**

B9a. Architect: William Ficker

b. Builder: J.D. Diffenbaugh

***B10. Significance: Theme:** Modern Architecture
Period of Significance: 1965
Applicable Criteria: 3/c

Area: Riverside
Property Type: Commercial/auto

Helgeson Buick at 8001 Auto Drive is a good example of a post-World War II automobile showroom in Riverside. It was constructed in 1965 and designed by architect William Ficker. It exhibits Mid-century Modern and International Style details specific to automobile showrooms of this period, including floor-to-ceiling glazing, flat roof, exposed structural system, and use of steel framing. In 1965, seven of the city’s automobile dealerships moved from their downtown quarters to a jointly owned Auto Center along the freeway at Adams Street. It was one of the first centers of its type in the United States. The idea for the center originated in a discussion among five dealers. Of the original Auto Center buildings, only Dutton Motor Company and Helgeson Buick retain sufficient integrity for historic designation. The Helgeson Buick dealership is the most distinctive.

Helgeson Buick retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. It appears eligible for listing in the California Register at the local level of significance, and as a local landmark. It is significant under the theme Modern Architecture as a good example of a Mid-Century Modern/International Style automobile showroom in Riverside. It does not appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to alterations to the site, including the demolition of two of the original buildings. In addition, it does not meet National Register Criterion Consideration G of “exceptional importance” required for properties that are less than fifty years old.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes:

***B12. References:**

City of Riverside Building Permits.

City of Riverside Modernism Context Statement, prepared for the City of Riverside by Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, Los Angeles, CA, November 2009.

County of Riverside Property Information Center.
Riverside County Land Information System (LIS).

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** Christine Lazzaretto

***Date of Evaluation:** March 20, 2013

(This space reserved for official comments.)





View looking South (March 2013)



View looking Southeast (March 2013)