Meeting Date: **7/14/2015**

Report Type: Public Hearing

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City of SACRAMENTO

City Council Report
915 I Street, 1st Floor
www.CityofSacramento.org

Title: Considering the Nominated Capitol Towers Historic District and Contributing Resources (M15-001) [Passed for Publication 06/23/2015; Published 06/26/2015; Noticed 07/02/2015]

Location: District 4

Recommendation: Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion, adopt, modify, or reject an Ordinance listing the Capitol Towers Historic District and Contributing Resources, located in portions of the area south of N Street, north of P Street, east of 5th Street, and west of 7th Street, in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Register) as a Historic District and Contributing Resources, and specifying the district's and contributing resources' significant features and characteristics.

Contact: Elise Gumm, Associate Planner, 916-808-1927; Roberta Deering, Preservation Director, 916-808-8259, Community Development Department

Presenter: Roberta Deering, Preservation Director, 916-808-8259, Community Development Department

Department: Community Development Dept

Division: Planning Design/Preservation

Dept ID: 21001226

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

2-Background

3-Capitol Towers Boundary Map

4-Capitol Towers Nomination Form

5-Ordinance

City Attorney Review

Approved as to Form
Michael W. Voss
7/7/2015 2:41:11 PM

Approvals/Acknowledgements

Department Director or Designee: Ryan Devore - 6/30/2015 8:40:07 AM

James Sanchez, City Attorney Shirley Concolino, City Clerk Russell Fehr, City Treasurer
John F. Shirey, City Manager

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: Sacramento Modern (SacMod), a not-for-profit organization, submitted an application for the nomination of the Capitol Towers property for listing in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) as a Historic District, including the Historic District's Contributing Resources. A historic context of the proposed district, including National Register of Historic Places Registration form (Attachment 4), were also submitted by SacMod for the proposed Historic District and Contributing Resources, including an evaluation relative to the Sacramento Register eligibility criteria. The City's Preservation Director held a public hearing on the application and forwarded the nomination of a Capitol Towers Historic District and its Contributing Resources to the City's Preservation Commission, which then held a public hearing on the nomination. At the conclusion of its hearing, the Preservation Commission passed a motion to forward a recommendation to the City Council for the City Council's consideration and action on the nomination to list the Capitol Towers Historic District, Contributing Resources, and the significant features and characteristics of the district and contributing resources, in the Sacramento Register.

The Preservation Commission recommended the City Council adopt an ordinance to list the Capitol Towers complex as a historic district in the Sacramento Register. The City Council has the discretion to "adopt, modify or reject the action recommended by the preservation commission." (City Code, § 17.604.220(C)(2).)

Summary of Evidence in the Record

City Code section 17.604.220(C) (2) authorizes the City Council to list a resource on the Sacramento Register after adopting findings of fact in support of the designation by uncodified ordinance. The proposed ordinance (Attachment 4 to this Staff Report) sets forth findings of fact supporting the designation. These findings are supported by evidence included in the nomination application submittal materials and other materials presented to the Preservation Commission and City Council.

The City Council is also considering the Sacramento Commons Mixed-use Development Project (P14-012) on July 14, 2015. If the City Council approves the Capitol Towers Historic District designation or approves the designation with modifications and adopts the proposed ordinance, the City Council retains the discretion to authorize demolition of historic resources included in the historic district per the proposed Sacramento Commons project, after making findings required pursuant to City Code section 17.808.180(A)(2). (See also 2035 General Plan, Policy 2.1.15 [authorizing demolition of an historic resource where "public benefits outweigh the loss of the historic resource"].)

Alternatively, the City Council may decide not to list the property in the Sacramento Register. City Code section 17.604.220(C)(2) does not require the City Council make any findings to reject a nomination. In addition, findings are not required for legislative

acts unless a statute requires them, which is not the case for the legislative act of listing a historic district.

In determining whether to list a resource on the Sacramento Register as a historic district the City Council should consider if listing the resource may be inconsistent with other goals and policies of the city. The City Council has the discretion to reject the nomination on the basis of city goal and policy consistency. The findings regarding the Sacramento Commons project include a detailed analysis of the project's consistency with city goals and policies. The 2035 General Plan, Policy HCR 2.1.15, acknowledges and authorizes demolition of historic resources as a last resort under three separate circumstances: (1) rehabilitation of the resource is not feasible, (2) demolition is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents, or (3) the public benefits outweigh the loss of the historic resource. Preserving a low-density complex, with a substantial portion of the approximately 10 acre Capitol Towers superblock containing low-rise residential apartments, could compromise achievement of the Sacramento Commons project's density objectives. Those objectives are consistent with the City's goal to promote "compact, higher-density development" in the Central Business District (CBD). (See, e.g. 2035 General Plan, Policy LU 1.1.1.) Based on the project's location in the heart of the City of Sacramento's CBD land use designation, the City desires the project site to be built out with substantial density. In recognition of the City's desire to increase density on the Sacramento Commons project site, the City Council, in adopting the 2030 General Plan, expressly considered the superblock and designated the project site to allow for between 61 and 450 units per acre. The City Council reaffirmed its desire for additional density on the project site in March of 2015 when it approved the 2035 General Plan, which retains the CBD designation calling for 61 and 450 units per acre. The current density of the project site is approximately 40 units per acre.

Listing an area as a historic district on the Sacramento Register does not prohibit redevelopment. However, listing a property on the Sacramento Register is, in part, done to protect the integrity of the historical resource through requiring Preservation Development project Site Plan and Design Review for future development of the site, including ensuring projects comply with the historic Rehabilitation Standards, and, therefore, would not facilitate the significantly increased density that is proposed by the Sacramento Commons' project's redevelopment of the site. Furthermore, during the Planning and Design Commission public hearing on the project, several regional agencies, including Sacramento Regional Transit District, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, and Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), testified in support of the project and the City's goals and policies supporting redevelopment of the project site based on various regional benefits of the project including increased public transit use, reduced regional vehicle miles traveled, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Similarly, SACOG has submitted several letters to the City concerning the project to reiterate its position that "the proposed mixed-use

redevelopment plan, its location in a neighborhood that provides a surrounding mix of uses – retail, residential, office, and its close proximity to transit – will assist in implementing the Blueprint and the MTP/SCS." [FEIR, Appendix D (May 12, 2015 SACOG Letter, p. 2); see also DEIR, Appendix A.] For all of these reasons, the City Council may determine that it would be inconsistent with the City's density and intensity goals for the Sacramento Commons project site to list the Capitol Towers as a historic district on the Sacramento Register.

Policy Considerations: The proposed action is consistent with the City's Historic & Cultural Resources Element of the 2035 General Plan and the Historic Preservation sections in Title 17 of the City Code, as well as the City's Strategic Plan Focus Area of "sustainability and livability."

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations: The Environmental Planning Services Manager has determined that this action, considering and listing a property in the Sacramento Register, is not a Project per Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

Relationship to Sacramento Commons CEQA Analysis

The Sacramento Register's eligibility criteria are similar but not identical to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) criteria. Listing on the NRHP and/or CRHR does not require the City to list a property on the Sacramento Register. There are many properties listed in the National and California Registers that are not listed in the Sacramento Register. Similarly, the City has the discretion to list properties on the Sacramento Register that are not listed on the NRHP and/or CRHR. For CEQA purposes, if a property is listed on any of the local, state or national registers, it would be considered a historical resource. If the Council declines to list the Capitol Towers property in the Sacramento Register, the property is still considered a historical resource for CEQA purposes, since it is listed in the California Register.

The Keeper of the (National) Register determined that Capitol Towers is eligible for listing on the NRHP. Public Resources Code section 5024.1(d)(1), in turn, provides that where the Keeper determines a California property is eligible for listing on the NRHP, the property is automatically listed on the CRHR. Thus, as a result of the determination by the Keeper of the (National) Register, Capitol Towers has been listed on the CRHR.

CEQA provides that a resource listed on the CRHR is a historic resource for the purposes of CEQA review. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15064.5(a)) Therefore, whether or not the City Council exercises its discretion to list the property on the Sacramento Register, as explained in the City's CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations for the Sacramento Commons Project (CEQA Findings), the City has determined that for the purposes of CEQA the property is an historic resource.

As discussed in the CEQA Findings supporting the Sacramento Commons project, the City Council will carefully consider whether feasible mitigation measures or alternatives are available to reduce the project's impact to a less than significant level. Although the project retains the historic pedestrian grid on the superblock, retains the Capitol Towers high-rise tower, relocates and retains the Overhoff sculptural wall onsite, and Mitigation Measure 4.4-2 requires extensive documentation and onsite and offsite educational materials to be prepared to educate the public regarding Capitol Towers, the project's impact on Capitol Towers remains significant and unavoidable. (See, e.g. CEQA Findings, p. 22) The City has identified no feasible alternative required by CEQA that is capable of reducing the project's significant and unavoidable historic resource impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, even if the City Council finds Capitol Towers should not be listed on the Sacramento Register, to approve the Sacramento Commons project, CEQA requires the City Council adopt a statement of overriding considerations in accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15093. (See CEQA Findings, pp. 110-113)

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: The City's Preservation Director held a Public Hearing on February 19, 2015 on Sacramento Modern's nomination application for listing a proposed Capitol Towers historic district and its proposed contributing resources in the Sacramento Register. On February 27, 2015, the Preservation Director issued a written decision to concur with the nomination application submittal materials and made a preliminary determination that the property is eligible as a Historic District and landmark, and specific properties and features within the area are eligible for listing as Contributing Resources in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) pursuant to the City's eligibility criteria, and forwarded the nomination of a Capitol Towers Historic District and the district's Contributing Resources to the Preservation Commission. The Preservation Director also forwarded recommendations for significant features and characteristics of the Historic District and the Contributing Resources for the Preservation Commission's consideration.

Subsequently, on April 15, 2015, the City's Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the nominated historic district and contributing resources, and their significant features and characteristics. After reviewing the materials submitted by the applicant, the nomination and recommendations from the Preservation Director, and taking public testimony, the Preservation Commission passed a motion to forward a recommendation to the City Council to adopt an ordinance listing the Capitol Towers

Historic District and its Contributing Resources in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) and specifying the district's and contributing resources' significant features and characteristics.

Rationale for Recommendation: Pursuant to City Code, the Preservation Commission forwards a recommended action to the City Council whether to add or not add a property to the Sacramento Register. That recommendation is consistent with processes established in the Historic Preservation sections in Title 17 of the City Code. The City Council has the discretion to "adopt, modify or reject the action recommended by the preservation commission." (City Code, § 17.604.220(C) (2)) The City Council has the discretion, based on the evidence before it, to:

(1) Concur with the Preservation Commission's recommendation and adopt the proposed ordinance;

(2) Identify different significant features and characteristics than those making up the basis for the Preservation Commission's recommendation and adopt the historic district designation as modified by the City Council; or

(3) Reject the nomination by passing a motion to not adopt the proposed ordinance.

Financial Considerations: None.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

Background Information: The proposed Capitol Towers Historic District and Contributing Resources were recorded and evaluated as part of a Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) nomination application, submitted by Sacramento Modern (SacMod), a not-for-profit organization, which recordation and evaluation was developed by Page & Turnbull, a historic preservation, architecture, planning and conservation firm; see attached recordation/evaluation forms on the proposed historic district and contributing resources.

In accordance with the City Code, Title 17, Chapter 17.604.220.A Initiation of nomination proceedings, on February 19, 2015, the City of Sacramento's Preservation Director reviewed the nomination application materials submitted by SacMod and held a public hearing relative to the proposed historic district and contributing resources. On February 27, 2015, the Preservation Director issued a written decision concurring with the nomination application submittal materials and nominated the Capitol Towers Historic District and Contributing Resources to the Sacramento Register, and forwarded the nomination to the City's Preservation Commission for its consideration.

On April 15, 2015, the Preservation Commission reviewed the nomination application submittal materials, the Preservation Director decision and recommendations, and comments received, held a public hearing, and passed a motion to forward a recommendation to the City Council to adopt an ordinance to add the Capitol Towers Historic District and its' Contributing Resources to the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources, and identify the proposed district's and contributing resources' significant features and characteristics.

Eligibility Criteria:

HISTORIC DISTRICT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The Preservation Director made a preliminary determination, and the Preservation Commission concurred, that the area is eligible as a Historic District under the following Criterion pursuant to the Historic Preservation Chapter, Chapter 17.604.210, Planning & Development Code, Title 17 of the City Code:

a. *The area is a geographically definable area; or*
b. *The area possesses either:*
    i. *A significant concentration or continuity of buildings unified by: (A) past events or (B) aesthetically by plan or physical development; or*

ii. The area is associated with an event, person, or period significant or important to city history; or

c. The designation of the geographic area as a historic district is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to protect, promote and further the goals and purposes of this chapter and is not inconsistent with other goals and policies of the city.

The area also retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. In addition, the collective historic value of the buildings and structures in a historic district taken together may be greater than the historic value of each individual building or structure. The nomination of the Capitol Towers Historic District is necessary to promote, protect, and further the goals and purposes of the Historic & Cultural Resources Element of the 2035 General Plan and the Historic Preservation chapter of Title 17 of the City Code.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The Preservation Director also made a preliminary determination, and the Preservation Commission concurred, that, within the nominated Capitol Towers Historic District includes nominated Contributing Resources. All three properties within the Capitol Towers complex are nominated as Contributing Resources to the Historic District. For a property to be listed in the Sacramento Register as a Contributing Resource, all of the following requirements must be satisfied:

1. *The nominated resource is within a historic district;*
2. *The nominated resource either embodies the significant features and characteristics of the historic district or adds to the historical associations, historical architectural qualities or archaeological values identified for the historic district;*
3. *The nominated resource was present during the period of historical significance of the historic district and relates to the documented historical significance of the historic district;*
4. *The nominated resource either possesses historic integrity or is capable of yielding important information about the period of historical significance of the historic district; and*
5. *The nominated resource has important historic or architectural worth, and its designation as a contributing resource is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to protect, promote and further the goals and purposes of this chapter.*

The Preservation Director also made a preliminary determination, with which the Preservation Commission also concurred, that the property meets the following Landmark eligibility criteria:

i. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation;

iii. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;

iv. It represents the work of an important creative individual or master;

v. It possesses high artistic values; or

b. The nominated resource has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and association. Integrity shall be judged with reference to the particular criterion or criteria specified [above];

c. The nominated resource has significant historic or architectural worth, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to promote, protect and further the goals and purposes of this chapter.

Capitol Towers Historic District Character-Defining Features:

The nominated District's and Contributing Resources' era of significance is 1959-1965.

The Preservation Director recommended, and the Preservation Commission concurred, that the Historic District's and Contributing Resources' significant features and characteristics include:

<u>SITE</u>

The site and landscape design is an integral part of Capitol Towers. This includes the spatial organization and circulation within the property, placement and relationships of the buildings to each other and to the landscape, specific landscape features, views and vistas, and small-scale features:

- **Spatial Organization** – *rectilinear pedestrian axes that divide the complex into four smaller garden-oriented quadrants; historic axial streets of O Street and 6th Street were repurposed as pedestrian access routes that were integrated into the superblock organization; low-rise*

garden apartments with shared lawns line the main pedestrian axes similar to a city street; the intersection of the pedestrian axes forms Capitol Towers' central plaza where its distinct sculpture wall is a focal point and helps with orientation; other community amenities are near the center, including a communal swimming pool and the high-rise tower with its ground-floor restaurants, shops, and offices. The east-west axis zigzags around the central plaza to continue as a walkway between the swimming pool and the tower. The spatial relationships between the low-rise and the high-rise buildings create a comfortable density that avoids enormous stretches of vast emptiness seen in some "towers in the park" developments; the park-like setting is created through a variety of proportionally-scaled spaces for private uses, shared lawns, quiet courtyards, communal gathering, and recreational use; for the residents, privacy and community are balanced; the project served as an early and highly regarded demonstration of both interactive public space connected with the city circulation, and a respite for the core residential community. As much as Capitol Towers is a self-contained, pedestrian-oriented property, it remains open, permeable, and complementary to the larger urban context; at the northeast and southeast corners, the low-rises present a street-facing presence to engage the property with the surrounding streets, which is unlike earlier larger-scaled garden apartment complexes that emphasized an internal orientation as an escape from the city; similarly, the main north-south and east-west pedestrian axes at Capitol Towers generally continue the urban sidewalk grid, rather than create a new circulation pattern; the low-rise buildings and their balconies internally face the main pedestrian walks as on a city street, and the open and welcoming pedestrian entrances at the west, north, and south allow residents and non-residents alike to walk through the development and reconnect with the street grid; the parking areas…are placed at the edges so that Capitol Towers can have open, car-free internal spaces. The surface parking areas are tucked into interior courts and accessed from the streets by narrow driveway curb cuts.

- **Building Placement and Relationships** – *two low-rise garden apartment buildings are in each quadrant of the superblock; the long, narrow buildings are roughly L-shaped, linear, or zigzag in plan and are sited relative to each other to line the main axes as well as create secondary landscaped courtyards; at the property periphery, the buildings surround surface parking and service courts while also fronting city streets at the southeast (P and 7th Streets) and northeast (N and 7th Streets) edges with small lawns; the arrangement of buildings allows for shared open green spaces, private outdoor spaces, convenient access to automobile parking, and an urban presence for the property; the high-rise apartment tower, located in the northeast quadrant toward the*

center of the superblock, is visible from within and from outside the property; while the tower is adjacent to both surface parking and the four-level parking garage at the eastern edge of the property at 7th Street, it is also surrounded by pedestrian walkway and landscaped areas that connect it to the low-rise apartment buildings, central plaza, and pool area without overwhelming the lower-scale features; three one-story ancillary buildings used for laundry facilities and as a lounge with adjacent former playground spaces are at the northwest and southwest corners of the property, as well as north of the high-rise.

- **Circulation** – *In addition to the main pedestrian axes, smaller walkways branch off from the main axes through the lawns and courtyards of the interior green spaces, leading to the residential units; these branches extend into the low-rise apartment buildings through the breezeways that separate the unit modules; pedestrian access extends further beyond the residential units to the parking facilities, which allows for easy access between one's automobile and residence without impeding pedestrian flow of the central areas; other paths extend to the ancillary buildings and the high-rise tower; most pedestrian paths are paved with concrete and are straight and rectilinear in orientation, except for one curving pathway along the southern part of the west main pedestrian axis; this pathway interrupts the grid-like pedestrian routes that extend to the residential units but provides an alternate walking experience through the superblock; with automobile circulation limited to the property's periphery, six automobile access drives lead to interior surface parking and service courts and the four-level parking garage.*

- **Landscape Features** – *The landscape design at Capitol Towers is defined by public common spaces, semi-public shared lawns, secondary courtyards between buildings, landscaped courts, and private outdoor spaces like patios and balconies; each of the 409 residential units (206 in low-rise buildings and 203 in the high-rise tower) has a private rear patio or balcony; some existing site and street trees were retained and incorporated at the time of construction, while new trees were planted then and have matured, creating [some areas of] full canopies on the property; the ground cover is primarily grass on lawns that connect across the low-rise buildings, in addition to low planting around the low-rise modules; the central plaza is a paved area formed by a widened section of the north-south walkway axis; the plaza contains a grid of London plane trees set into concrete pavers, along with a low circular fountain with central jets at the southeast corner; anchoring the plaza is a long sculptural wall designed by Jacques Overhoff at the eastern edge; the back or east side of the sculpture wall faces the swimming pool; the pool is rectilinear and is oriented length-wise along the east-west axis;*

the pool is set within a large patio area; in addition to the shared lawns, several public landscaped courts are found throughout Capitol Towers; these landscaped courts typically have grids of trees providing shade, and grass, low plantings, gravel, or other ground cover, and wood-slat benches; they offer a transition and entry point at each surfacing parking lot and near the north and south pedestrian entrances as a buffer to the two towers that are not part of the property; the landscaped court at the north end of the superblock, located west of the north-south main walkway, is a sunken court.

- **Views & Vistas** – *The views and vistas at Capitol Towers Apartments are set within the landscape orientation; the main axes and rectilinear pathways frame the property and establish a series of forced axial perspectives that are softened by the staggered, informal garden apartment buildings and irregular and more picturesque plantings; the breezeways between the unit modules and the landscape courts also serve to frame views as a transitional experience between the superblock interior and the peripheral parking facilities; views from the first-floor units of the low-rise apartment buildings are restricted by walls that enclose private patios; the upper story units have balconies at the opposite side of the building overlooking interior green spaces rather than infringing upon the privacy of the first-floor patios; views and vistas from the high-rise apartment tower vary, depending on height and orientation.*

- **Small-Scale Features** – *Capitol Towers contains a number of small-scale features set within the landscape; they include metal and wood-slat benches, banner flag posts, globe light posts, a circular fountain, …[and] wood-slat… trash receptacles.*

- **Object** – *Artist Jacques Overhoff designed the approximately 100-foot, free-standing sculpture wall in the central plaza for Capitol Towers; the wall is several panels of cast concrete with a bas relief of abstract shapes.*

<u>BUILDINGS</u>

Within Capitol Towers are two main residential building types: two- and three-story garden apartment buildings and a high-rise apartment tower; ancillary buildings include three one-story laundry/lounge facilities and a four-story parking garage:

- **Low-Rise Garden Apartment Buildings** – *Each of the low-rise garden apartment buildings consists of staggered unit modules connected by open breezeways and a continuous flat, built-up roof with a unifying four-foot deep eave of exposed wood rafters and boards; the wood-frame unit modules are clad in [smooth] stucco…; each two-story module contains*

two or four units (one or two per floor); the three-story modules, located at the end of some buildings, contain a first-floor flat and a two-story unit on the upper floors; there are six unit types, ranging from studio to three-bedroom layouts; the unit entry doors are in the breezeways, as are wood stairs with [open risers, and] metal railings that lead to the second-floor units; the primary fenestration is a tall, tripartite aluminum-framed window unit with casement windows (one operable, one fix) above a single, fixed pane of glazing; the windows are in regular patterns, but the pattern varies based on the unit types; each unit has an outdoor space accessed through an aluminum-framed sliding glass door with one or two fixed, full-height glazing; the first-floor units have private patios enclosed by wood-board fencing topped by open-framed rails that are generally oriented toward the surface parking and service courts; the second-floor units have wood balconies with metal railing and are oriented to the opposite façade from the patios to provide privacy; the balconies generally face landscaped lawns and walkways toward the superblock interior or city streets; privacy and shading are further enhanced for the patios by wood-slat overhangs between the first and second floors above the sliding glass door. As a matter of its Modern design as well as a budget limited by FHA requirements, the buildings are simply and subtly detailed; the low-rise buildings are staggered to prevent straight, monotonous blocks of units; breezeways between modules create permeable spaces for natural breezes, views, and pedestrian circulation; simple design details, such as the uniformly deep eaves and the wood-slat sunshades over the patio doors, not only create architectural accents and visual consistency but they also provide functional sun protection and dynamic shading throughout the property; such details, along with the unusual casement windows with lower panes that form almost full-height glazing and private outdoor areas for each unit, add to the visual interest and livability of the units.

- **High-Rise Tower** – *The high-rise apartment tower is a 15-story, rectangular building that is oriented lengthwise along the superblock's east-west pedestrian axis; it is a reinforced concrete building; the roof is flat with air conditioning and other equipment as well as a screened cooling tower on top; the high-rise has a partially recessed base, a middle shaft of apartment units with balconies, and a projecting penthouse level; its exterior is primarily aluminum-framed glazing and board-formed concrete with a vertical board pattern; the upper stories are defined by a series of horizontal bands that separate each floor; the north and south facades feature bays of projecting concrete balconies; each façade is different and asymmetrical with its vertical orientation reinforced by the stacking of balconies and windows; the south façade has two main groups of balconies, one with three balconies and one with four; full-height*

partition walls divide the balconies, which have low concrete end walls and metal railings; each balcony contains a glazed wall with a full-height sliding glass door and two full-height fixed glazed panels; between the balcony groupings and at the east and west ends of the south façade are two bays of aluminum-framed windows separated by board-formed concrete walls; these full-height, four-lite window units have a fixed top and bottom lite and a pair of operable casement windows in the center; the north façade is similar to the south façade, but has three bays of balconies; the central bay has three balconies, while the east bay has two and the west bay has a single balcony; pairs of the four-lite casement window units are located between the balcony bans and at the east and west ends of the north façade; the west façade has two bays of balconies, one at each end; between the bays is board-formed concrete with a vertical board pattern and an open, recessed stair landing with fire doors and metal railing; each balcony has concrete end walls and metal railing, as well as a sliding glass door and a pair of aluminum-framed casement windows with a fixed top lite; the east façade has two bays of shallow balconettes with full-height sliding glass doors board-formed concrete is located between the balconette bays; a bay of recessed stair landings is also between the balconette bays; at the top of the building is a projecting, continuous balcony with metal posts and railing around all facades; the penthouse units are recessed with full-height windows and sliding doors to the balcony; the high-rise tower contains studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartment units along a double-loaded corridor, while three-bedroom units are at the penthouse level; the partially recessed ground floor has a shaded colonnade of board-formed concrete piers on the north and south sides, while the west end is an open breezeway; the east end [originally set back from the concrete piers]; the ground floor contains full-height aluminum-framed storefront windows for the building lobby and the neighborhood-serving retail, offices, and restaurants. The high-rise tower, one of the earliest by WBE, is similarly modest in detail but avoids flatness and monotony; though the windows, sliding glass doors, and concrete balconies are consistent on the two long sides (north and south facades), they have different bay patterns for visual interest; the projecting penthouse balcony gives the building a top, almost in the traditional base-shaft-top organization seen in Classical and New Formalist buildings; the base of the high-rise is partially open and recessed to create a sense of lightness and reception; the resulting colonnade offers a shaded walkway to access the neighborhood-serving retail and restaurants.

- **Laundry/Lounge Buildings** –*There are three, one-story, concrete block buildings on the property constructed with the low-rises between 1959 and 1961; they are rectangular in plan with flat roofs and four-foot deep*

eaves.

- **Parking Garage** – *The parking garage is a four-level split-level building; constructed with the high-rise tower between 1963 and 1965, it is located along the eastern edge of the property, alongside 7th Street and southeast of the high-rise apartment tower; the garage is reinforced concrete and features exit-entrance ramps on the ground floors of the north and south sides; all stories feature exterior half-walls with pipe guard railings; two exterior stairwells protrude from the north and south sides; an elevator shaft also protrudes from the north side of the garage, adjacent to the stairwell.*

REQUIREMENTS, BENEFITS, AND RESTRICTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH NOMINATION

Requirements for placement on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) as a Landmark, Historic District, or a Contributing Resource within a historic district are listed in Sacramento City Code, Title 17, Planning & Development Code, Section 17.604.210. Generally, nominated resources are noted for one or more of the following characteristics: they are associated with the history of the city and/or the lives of persons significant to its past; they embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, have high artistic value, and/or have significant historic or architectural worth; and concerning historic districts, they have a geographical definable area with a significant concentration or continuity of resources unified by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

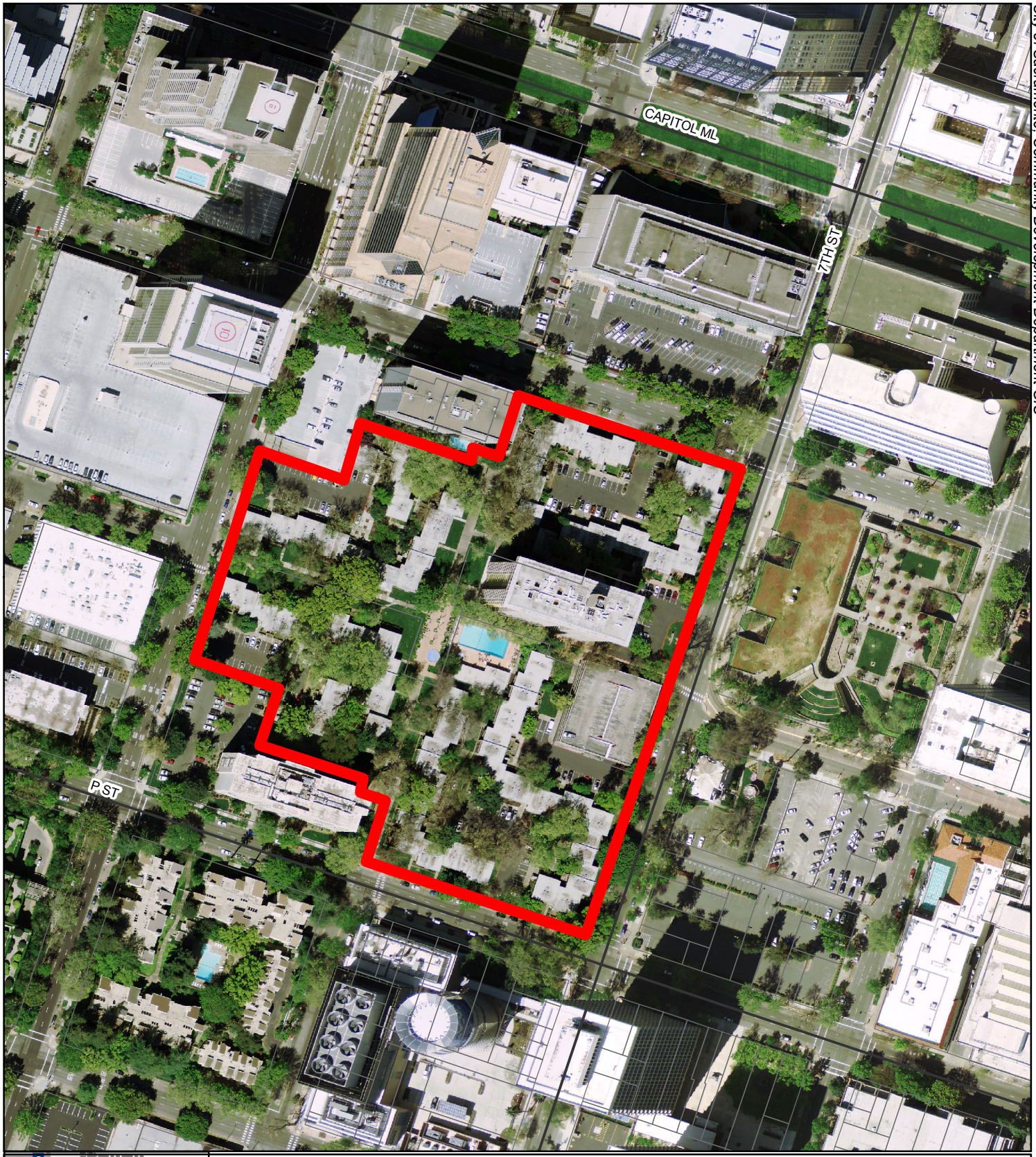
The City Council has found that placement of qualifying resources and historic districts in the Sacramento Register benefits the community and the owner in numerous ways. Protecting and preserving historic resources helps to maintain and revitalize the City and its neighborhoods by stimulating economic activity, encouraging the use and reuse of historic buildings, and protecting buildings and neighborhoods from deterioration and inappropriate alterations, all of which enhance the City's economic, cultural, and aesthetic standing.

The Preservation Commission is authorized to develop and implement preservation incentives, including the use of the California Historical Building Code, which may provide flexibility in means to meet Building Code standards in order to retain historic fabric and preserve historic features and characteristics of the property. The City Code also provides for zoning and use incentives to assist in the preservation and the adaptive reuse of listed historic properties.

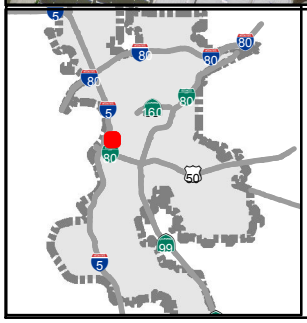
The Historic Preservation definitions section and other sections of the City's Planning and Development Code, Title 17 of the City Code, including Chapter 17.604 and other chapters, regulates the approval and issuance of permits and entitlements involving resources listed in the Sacramento Register, including: planning entitlements and building permits for: new construction; exterior alterations of existing buildings or structures; work affecting certain significant publicly-accessible interiors; site work; relocation of any structure; demolition or wrecking of any building or structure; sewer connection or disconnection; signs; and certificates of use or occupancy.

Landmarks, Historic Districts and Contributing Resources nominated by the Preservation Commission by approval of a recommendation to the City Council to adopt an ordinance to designate a property or properties and list those properties in the Sacramento Register are regulated under Chapter 17.604 for a period of 180 days in the same manner as if they were listed in the Sacramento Register. After 180 days has elapsed, if the City Council has not adopted an ordinance placing the resources in the Sacramento Register, these restrictions would no longer apply, unless the City Council extends the time period for an additional 180 days.

In addition, Chapter 17.604.800 sets forth minimum maintenance requirements for the purpose of protecting listed historic resources from deliberate or inadvertent neglect. Prompt correction of structural defects is required. The Code Enforcement Manager and Building Official are authorized to enforce the provisions of this Chapter and utilize provisions of Chapter 1.28 of Title 1 of the Sacramento City Code. The City Attorney is authorized to take such legal actions as are legally available.



City of Sacramento, Community Development Department GIS



M15-001
Proposed Capitol Towers Historic District Boundary Map

Feet
0 260 520

N

E. Gumm | June 2, 2015

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: _____Capitol Towers_____

Other names/site number: ___Capitol Towers and Garden Apartments _____

Name of related multiple property listing**:**

_____N/A_____

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

---

2. Location

Street & number: ___1500 7th Street _____

City or town: _ Sacramento _____ State: _ CA ___ County: _ Sacramento_____

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

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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

_____

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

_____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

_____

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

_____

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

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:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	
District	X
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
13	1	buildings
1		sites
		structures
1		objects
		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
__ Modern Movement _
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _____

Foundation:	Concrete footing (low-rises) and concrete piles (high-rise)
Walls:	Stucco (low-rises) and board-formed reinforced concrete (high-rise)
Roof:	Build-up composite roofing

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

Capitol Towers is a large-scale, multi-family Modern residential complex with low-rise garden apartment buildings, a high-rise tower, and pedestrian-oriented landscapes on an approximately 10-acre superblock in downtown Sacramento, California. Constructed between 1959 and 1965, Capitol Towers was among the first privately-sponsored urban redevelopment projects in California. A talented design team that included architecture firms Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons (WBE), Edward Larrabee Barnes, and DeMars & Reay, as well as landscape architect Lawrence Halprin designed the property. The site planning and building and landscape design reflect the designers' concern less with style, trends, or architectural doctrines than with functionality, comfort and livability through collaborative design. The modest, stucco-clad, deep-eave low-rise garden apartment buildings, consisting of staggered unit modules to prevent monotonous linear blocks, fan across the superblock and shape exterior spaces such as landscaped courts, pedestrian walkways, and surface parking lots. The horizontality of the garden apartment buildings also complements the concrete and glass high-rise building on-site and those on adjacent properties in a dynamic interplay between well-scaled horizontal and

vertical elements. At the center of the property is a central plaza and pool. Derived from Garden City principles, Capitol Towers is an internal, pedestrian-oriented property with shared interior landscaped areas, and automobile and service uses placed at the periphery. Yet, unlike garden apartment complexes that are insular and in suburban settings, Capitol Towers maintains an urban street presence with the low-rise units fronting city streets, parking lots pulled inward as interior courts, and a sense of openness, order, and permeability that connects with the surrounding street grid. Despite alterations of some features on resources across the property, Capitol Towers retains adequate integrity of its primary spatial relationships, residential buildings, and landscape features to convey its significance.

Narrative Description

Overview

Capitol Towers contains 13 contributing buildings constructed in three phases between 1959 and 1965:

- Eight (8) low-rise garden apartment buildings
- High-rise tower (1)
- Three (3) laundry/lounge buildings
- Parking structure (1)

The designed landscape that links the property together is a contributing site. The landscape has a number of features and elements that also contribute to the significance of the property, including the central plaza, secondary courtyards, landscape courts, and small-scale features. The sculpture wall by Jacques Overhoff in the central plaza is a contributing object. The pool house is a noncontributing building due to renovations and an expansion that have impacted its integrity.

Setting

Capitol Towers is in downtown Sacramento, less than a mile east from the western bank of the Sacramento River, about a quarter mile west of the California State Capitol building, and a block south of Capitol Avenue or Capitol Mall. The urban setting around Capitol Towers is predominately mid- and high-rise government and commercial office buildings constructed in the second half of the twentieth century as part of Sacramento's urban redevelopment and renewal efforts. State and federal multi-story office buildings line the block north of Capitol Towers along Capitol Mall. The 20-story State Office Building 8 & 9 built in 1969 is located off the southeast corner at P Street and Seventh Street. Governor's Square, a 1970s residential complex with three-story multi-family apartment buildings around a central pool is located a block southwest of Capitol Towers. Heilbron House, a historic 1881 residential building, is on Seventh Street across from Capitol Towers, and surrounded by surface parking. A low-scale building with a roof-top garden is also across Seventh Street from Capitol Towers.

Capitol Towers occupies most of four-block superblock bounded by N Street to the north, Seventh Street to the east, P Street to the south, and Fifth Street to the west. Two separate

properties, approximately one acre each, are also on the superblock. At the northwest corner near N Street and Fifth Street is Bridgeway Tower, a condominium high-rise residential tower and its two-story parking garage. At the southwest corner near P Street and Fifth Street is Pioneer II, a senior housing apartment tower and its surface parking lot. These high-rise buildings were developed separately in the late 1970s and early 1980s subsequent to Capitol Towers and are not part of the nomination.

Site Overview

Capitol Towers consists of three legal parcels that together form an irregular, stepped plan. The eastern half of the property spans between N Street at the north and P Street at the south. The property steps or tapers toward the west and extends to midblock to Fifth Street between the Bridgeway Tower and Pioneer II parcels.

The superblock has no vehicular access through the interior of the property. The main pedestrian entrance into Capitol Towers is at the west edge on Fifth Street, aligned with O Street. Pedestrian walkway entrances are also at the north at N Street and south at P Street between Capitol Towers and the adjacent properties. Capitol Towers' low-rise apartment buildings (described below) with lawns and mature trees line the city streets at the corners of N Street and P Street with Seventh Street. Its high-rise residential tower is located toward the center of the property but generally visible from nearby streets. Surface parking and service courts are toward the property's edges, framed by low-rise apartment buildings and with narrow curb cuts at the street front. A four-level parking garage and a surface parking lot are along the street front on Seventh Street.

Contributing Resource: Buildings

Within Capitol Towers are two main residential building types: two- and three-story garden apartment buildings and a high-rise apartment tower. Ancillary buildings include three one-story laundry/lounge facilities, a four-story parking garage, and a one-story pool house that has been altered and is not a contributing resource.

Low-Rise Garden Apartment Buildings

Each of the low-rise garden apartment buildings consists of staggered unit modules connected by open breezeways and a continuous flat, built-up roof with a unifying four-foot deep eave of exposed wood rafters and boards. The wood-frame unit modules are clad in stucco and stand on foundations of concrete footings. Some modules are bisected by concrete block firewalls that extend above the roofline.

Each two-story module contains two or four units (one or two per floor). The three-story modules, located at the end of some buildings, contain a first-floor flat and a two-story unit on the upper floors. There are six unit types, ranging from studio to three-bedroom layouts.

The unit entry doors are in the breezeways, as are wood stairs with metal railings that lead to the second-floor units. The primary fenestration is a tall, tripartite aluminum-framed window unit with casement windows (one operable, one fix) above a single, fixed pane of glazing. The

windows are in regular patterns, but the pattern varies based on the unit types. A horizontally oriented, boxed aluminum-framed sliding window projects into a few breezeways.

Each unit has an outdoor space accessed through an aluminum-framed sliding glass door with one or two fixed, full-high glazing. The first-floor units have private patios enclosed by wood-board fencing topped by open-framed rails that are generally oriented toward the surface parking and service courts. The second-floor units have wood balconies with metal railing and are oriented to the opposite façade from the patios to provide privacy. The balconies generally face landscape lawns and walkways toward the superblock interior or city streets. Privacy and shading are further enhanced for the patios by wood-slat overhangs between the first and second floors above the sliding glass door.

High-Rise Tower
The high-rise apartment tower is a 15–story, rectangular building that is oriented lengthwise along the superblock's east-west pedestrian axis. It is a reinforced concrete building on a foundation of concrete piles. The roof is flat with air conditioning and other equipment as well as a screened cooling tower on top.

The high-rise has a partially recessed base, a middle shaft of apartment units with balconies, and a projecting penthouse level. Its exterior is primarily aluminum-framed glazing and board-formed concrete with a vertical board pattern. The corners of the middle section is clad in newer grey stone veneer tile. The upper stories are defined by a series of horizontal bands that separate each floor. The north and south façades feature bays of projecting concrete balconies. Each façade is different and asymmetrical with its vertical orientation reinforced by the stacking of balconies and windows.

The south façade has two main groups of balconies, one with three balconies and one with four. Full-height partition walls divide the balconies, which have low concrete end walls and metal railings. Each balcony contains a glazed wall with a full-height sliding glass door and two full-height fixed glazed panels. Between the balcony groupings and at the east and west ends of the south façade are two bays of aluminum-framed windows separated by board-formed concrete walls. These full-height, four-lite window units have a fixed top and bottom lite and a pair of operable casement windows in the center.

The north façade is similar to the south façade, but has three bays of balconies. The central bay has three balconies, while the east bay has two and the west bay has a single balcony. Pairs of the four-lite casement window units are located between the balcony bays and at the east and west ends of the north façade.

The west façade has two bays of balconies, one at each end. Between the bays is board-formed concrete with a vertical board pattern and an open, recessed stair landing with fire doors and metal railing. Each balcony has concrete end walls and metal railing, as well as a sliding glass door and a pair of aluminum-framed casement windows with a fixed top lite. The east façade has two bays of shallow balconettes with full-height sliding glass doors. Gray stone veneer tiles clad

the façade at the north and south ends, while board-formed concrete is located between the balconette bays. A bay of recessed stair landings is also between the balconette bays.

At the top of the building is a projecting, continuous balcony with metal posts and railing around all façades. The penthouse units are recessed with full-height windows and sliding doors to the balcony, which is divided by full-height partitions between units. The high-rise tower contains studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartment units along a double-loaded corridor, while three-bedroom units are at the penthouse level.

The partially recessed ground floor has a shaded colonnade of board-formed concrete piers on the north and south sides, while the west end is an open breezeway. The east end's south corner is partially enclosed in newer glazing to the concrete piers while the northeast corner storefront glazing is set back from the piers. Non-original stone veneer tiles clad the bottom of the concrete piers. The ground floor contains full-height aluminum-framed storefront windows for the building lobby and the neighborhood-serving retail, offices, and restaurants.

Laundry/Lounge Buildings
There are three, one-story, concrete block buildings on the property constructed with the low-rises between 1959 and 1961. They are rectangular in plan with flat roofs and four-foot deep eaves. Originally all laundry buildings, the one at the northwest corner of the property is now a lounge. The two continuing to serve as laundry facilities are located at the southwest corner of the superblock and north of the tower. The buildings have a mix of fenestration, some original and some later additions.

Parking Garage
The parking garage is a four-level split-level building. Constructed with the high-rise tower between 1963 and 1965, it is located along the eastern edge of the property, alongside Seventh Street and southeast of the high-rise apartment tower. The garage is reinforced concrete and features exit-entrance ramps on the ground floors of the north and south sides. All stories feature exterior half-walls with pipe guard railings. Two exterior stairwells protrude from the north and south sides. An elevator shaft also protrudes from the north side of the garage, adjacent to the stairwell.

Contribution Resource: Site
The site and landscape design is an integral part of Capitol Tower. This includes the spatial organization and circulation within in the property, placement and relationships of the buildings to each other and to the landscape, specific landscape features, views and vistas, and small-scale features.

Spatial Organization
Much of Capitol Towers' spatial arrangement stems from the rectilinear pedestrian axes that divide the complex into four smaller garden-oriented quadrants. The historic axial streets of O Street and 6th Street were repurposed as pedestrian access routes that were integrated into the superblock organization. Low-rise garden apartments with shared lawns line the main pedestrian

axes similar to a city street. The intersection of the pedestrian axes forms Capitol Towers' central plaza where its distinct sculpture wall is a focal point and helps with orientation. Other community amenities are near the center, including a communal swimming pool and the high-rise tower with its ground-floor restaurants, shops, and offices. The east-west axis zigzags around the central plaza to continue as a walkway between the swimming pool and the tower.

Building Placement and Relationships
Two low-rise garden apartment buildings are in each quadrant of the superblock. The long, narrow buildings are roughly L-shaped, linear, or zigzag in plan and are sited relative to each other to line the main axes as well as create secondary landscaped courtyards. At the property periphery, the buildings surround surface parking and service courts while also fronting city streets at the southeast (P and Seventh Streets) and northeast (N and Seventh Streets) edges with small lawns. The arrangement of building allows for shared open green spaces, private outdoor spaces, convenient access to automobile parking, and an urban presence for the property.

The high-rise apartment tower, located in the northeast quadrant toward the center of the superblock, is visible from within and from outside the property. While the tower is adjacent to both surface parking and the four-level parking garage at the eastern edge of the property at Seventh Street, it is also surrounded by pedestrian walkway and landscaped areas that connect it to the low-rise apartment buildings, central plaza, and pool area without overwhelming the lower-scale features.

Three one-story ancillary buildings used for laundry facilities and as a lounge with adjacent former playground spaces are at the northwest and southwest corners of the property, as well as north of the high-rise.

Circulation
In addition to the main pedestrian axes, smaller walkways branch off from the main axes through the lawns and courtyards of the interior green spaces, leading to the residential units. These branches extend into the low-rise apartment buildings through the breezeways that separate the unit modules. Pedestrian access extends further beyond the residential units to the parking facilities, which allows for easy access between one's automobile and residence without impeding pedestrian flow of the central areas. Other paths extend to the ancillary buildings and the high-rise tower.

Most pedestrian paths are paved with concrete and are straight and rectilinear in orientation, except for one curving pathway along the southern part of the west main pedestrian axis. This pathway interrupts the grid-like pedestrian routes that extend to the residential units but provides an alternate walking experience through the superblock.

With the automobile circulation limited to the property's periphery, six automobile access drives lead to interior surface parking and service courts and the four-level parking garage: one enters at the northeast side from N Street, one at the southeast side from P Street, two on the west side from Fifth Street, and two on the east side from Seventh Street flanking the parking garage.

Landscape Features

The landscape design at Capitol Towers is defined by public common spaces, semi-public shared lawns, secondary courtyards between buildings, landscaped courts, and private outdoor spaces like patios and balconies. Each of the 409 residential units (206 in low-rise buildings and 203 in the high-rise tower) has a private rear patio or balcony. Some existing site and street trees were retained and incorporated at the time of construction, while new trees were planted then and have matured, creating full canopies on the property. The ground cover is primarily grass on lawns that connect across the low-rise buildings, in addition to low planting around the low-rise modules.

The central plaza is a paved area formed by a widened section of the north-south walkway axis. The plaza contains a grid of London plane trees set into concrete pavers, along with a low circular fountain with central jets at the southeast corner. Anchoring the plaza is a long sculptural wall designed by Jacques Overhoff at the eastern edge.

The back or east side of the sculpture wall faces the swimming pool and is clad with an alternating pattern of horizontal stone tiles. The pool is rectilinear and is oriented length-wise along the east-west axis. The pool is set within a large patio area, which also features a hot tub. A glass panel fence along its north, east, and south sides encloses the pool patio, and the pool house is located at the southern side.

In addition to the shared lawns, several public landscaped courts are found throughout Capitol Towers. These landscaped courts typically have grids of trees providing shade; and grass, low plantings, gravel, or other ground cover; and wood-slat benches. They offer a transition and entry point at each surfacing parking lot and near the north and south pedestrian entrances as a buffer to the two towers that are not part of the property. The landscaped court at the north end of the superblock, located west of the north-south main walkway, is a sunken court.

Views & Vistas

The views and vistas at Capitol Towers Apartments are set within the landscape orientation. The main axes and rectilinear pathways frame the property and establish a series of forced axial perspectives that are softened by the staggered, informal garden apartment buildings and irregular and more picturesque plantings. The breezeways between the unit modules and the landscape courts also serve to frame views as a transitional experience between the superblock interior and the peripheral parking facilities.

Views from the first-floor units of the low-rise apartment buildings are restricted by walls that enclose private patios. The upper story units have balconies at the opposite side of the building overlooking interior green spaces rather than infringing upon the privacy of the first-floor patios.

Views and vistas from the high-rise apartment tower vary, depending on height and orientation. They prominently feature the Capitol Towers property and landscaping, downtown Sacramento, the State Capitol, Interstate-5, and the Sacramento River.

Small-Scale Features
Capitol Towers contains a number of small-scale features set within the landscape. They include metal and wood-slat benches, banner flag posts, globe light posts, a circular fountain, wood-slat and aggregate concrete trash receptacles, and gardens edged with non-original slate. All units have non-original number signage and exterior frosted-glass light fixtures. Wood-board garbage enclosures with open-framed top rails are also found within the parking lots. The wood-slat benches and trash receptacles are from the original construction of Capitol Towers.

Contribution Resource: Object
Artist Jacques Overhoff designed the approximately 100-foot, free-standing sculpture wall in the central plaza for Capitol Towers. The wall is several panels of cast concrete with a bas relief of abstract shapes. The artwork is signed "Overhoff, '61" in the lower right corner and has since been painted. An alternating pattern of horizontal stone tiles clad the rear or back of the wall that faces the swimming pool, which is not the original finish.

Noncontributing Resource: Building
A stucco-clad pool house stands south of the swimming pool. It is L-shaped with a flat roof and bisected by a glass-enclosed passageway. The east section of the pool house has full-height windows at the north façade. The west section of the pool house is entirely enclosed by stucco walls. The pool house, which originally housed laundry facilities, was constructed along with the pool in 1961. In 2005-6, it was remodeled and expanded to the east, the central passageway was enclosed with glazed fencing, and window systems were replaced.[1]

Alterations
Although changes have occurred to the property since the completion of the tower in early 1965, most alterations at Capitol Towers have occurred to minor component elements rather than to any major building or landscape features, spatial relationships, or urban design concepts. The property underwent repairs and renovation between 2001 and 2006. The most notable change is in the breezeways, where wood-slat screens have been removed from the second-floor landings, the open-tread stairs have been closed, and wood railings have been replaced with metal. The original wood stairs and underlying wood structure remains.

At the balconies of the garden apartment buildings, the wood-paneled railings have been replaced with open metal railings, and while the private patios originally had wood-board enclosures, they did not have the open-framed top rails. The boxed-framed sliding windows that appear occasionally among the garden apartment buildings do not appear original, and the lower glazing at some window units have been covered with solid board. Stucco exteriors, which had integrated color, and wood finishes have typically been repainted.

At the high-rise tower, stone veneer tile has been added to the base of the concrete piers up to approximately three feet, and at the corners from the second floor to the top, most noticeably at the east façade. The ground floor's southeast corner was enclosed with aluminum-framed glazing

[1] City of Sacramento Permit No. 0505817, issued September 7, 2005.

in 2002 for a lobby expansion.[2] At the laundry and lounge buildings, some windows have been added.

The landscape similarly has had minor alterations in some locations. In the central plaza, box hedges have been added around each tree in the grid. Metal benches have replaced the original wood-slat benches with curved backs in the central plaza, though examples of the original benches remain in other locations on the property. Concrete planters have been removed, the Jacques Overhoff sculptural wall painted, and the fountain's water jets altered. However, the central plaza retains its key signature features and design relationships. In other areas of the property landscaped areas have had their plantings altered, but have remain soft scape spaces in original configurations. Playground equipment has been removed from outside of the laundry buildings, with one area now used as a pet park. Among the street furniture, the original globe light standard has been replaced throughout the property with a similar but not exact replicas. Some wood-slate trash cans have been replaced with concrete-aggregate trash receptacles, and all kiosks have been removed.

The swimming pool is in its original location and generally retains its original shape but it has new plaster, tile, and lights from 2002.[3] The metal-framed glass fencing around the pool is not original, nor is the hot tub, which was added in 2005-2006.[4] The back of the sculptural wall facing the pool has been altered more than once, and currently features linear gray tile.

Integrity

As a whole, Capitol Towers retains sufficient integrity of its urban design concepts, spatial organization, circulation patterns, primary residential buildings, and key landscape features to convey its significance, despite alterations to component elements. It retains all seven aspects of integrity:

Location:

The Capitol Towers complex has not been moved and retains integrity of its location. No major buildings or resources have been demolished or relocated.

Design:

The composition, balance, and juxtaposition of the low-rise garden apartment buildings and high-rise tower around associated open spaces is a major organizational design component of the Capitol Towers property that remains clearly evident today. All defining elements of the design program are extant. This includes the staggered setbacks of the garden apartments, the opposing patio and balcony orientations of the lower and upper garden apartment units, prominent circulation patterns, the open central plaza, varied softscape and hardscape areas, and parking locations at the outer edges. The spatial relationship between the low-rise and the high-rise buildings and the composition of built and landscape features has not been altered.

[2] City of Sacramento, permit no. 0114121, issued January 18, 2002.
[3] City of Sacramento, permit no. 0210273, issued July 30, 2002.
[4] City of Sacramento, Design Review file DR05-201 approved June 24, 2005 and permit no. 0600454, issued March 10, 2006.

The loss of some design features on contributing resources, including wood-slat screens in the breezeways and wood paneled balcony railings, somewhat alters the appearance of the low-rise buildings. The buildings, however, retain adequate design integrity in form, massing, layout, materials, and other character-defining design features: unifying deep eaves, original aluminum window units, and wood-slat sunshades at the patios. Similarly, the high-rise tower retains integrity of its design despite the addition of stone tile cladding along the corners of the middle section and at the base of its concrete piers. The buildings are all intact, retain the components found in the original design, and continue to be contributing resources to the property.

Despite cosmetic alterations to and around the swimming pool and the loss of some street furniture, including the original globe light standards, kiosks, some wood-slat benches and trash receptacles, the landscape design maintains its hierarchy of spaces and uses among communal, semi-public, and private spaces. The planting plan supplements and enhances circulation and plan composition. Tree planting arrangements and prominent species are mature and character-defining. As such, the overall site landscape at Capitol Towers retains its integrity of design.

The concrete block laundry and lounge buildings retain their integrity of design in form and massing, as well as with the deep overhang. Some new door and window openings have been added, but generally these buildings retain sufficient integrity to be contributing resources.

Setting:
The setting at Capitol Towers Apartments has not been significantly altered since the property was constructed. The surrounding context continues to be a fairly dense urban environment. The addition of two towers at the northwest and southwest corners, in areas planned for towers but constructed separate from Capitol Towers, do not adversely affect the setting of Capitol Towers, and like the centrally located high-rise building, create a complementary interplay of vertical and horizontal massing.

Capitol Towers continues to be successful as a pedestrian-oriented, multi-family housing community in a park-like setting with a measured spatial arrangement of integrated built and landscaped areas. As such, Capitol Towers retains its integrity of setting.

Materials:
Capitol Towers has lost some original materials—most notably the wood-slat screens at the breezeways, wood panel balcony railing of the garden apartment buildings, original globe light standard, and kiosks. Nonetheless, the primary built and landscape resources retain the majority of original materials and the selective removal of materials does not detrimentally affect the overall property's integrity. Therefore, the property retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship:
Similarly, the loss of some original materials has resulted in the loss of some workmanship, though the most notable examples of workmanship remain. This includes the board-formed concrete in a vertical board pattern on the high-rise tower, the wood-framed extended eaves, and

the formed cast panels which comprise Overhoff's concrete sculptural wall. Overall, the property retains integrity of workmanship.

Feeling:
The overall feeling of Capitol Towers remains that of a large-scale, pedestrian-oriented multi-family residential complex, as it was originally developed. The pleasant outdoor environment and communal atmosphere is a testament to the concepts of the original design, one that brought together a combination of simple architectural, landscape, and artistic features to create an engaging urban residential complex. Although the removal and replacement of some architectural elements affect the period feel, Capitol Towers still conveys the feeling of a complete residential community with a comprehensive midcentury Modern plan and composition.

Association:
Capitol Towers retains its integrity of association with early urban redevelopment in Sacramento and California. Despite some alterations, its essential form, design, and spatial organization have not changed from when it was constructed between 1959 and 1965. The components of the program and site plan are present and active. The complex is surrounded by other buildings and properties that are part of the Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project, including the Federal Building directly to the north that was constructed shortly after Capitol Towers' initial low-rise units were built.

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.)

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_Community Planning and Development____
_Architecture _____
_Landscape Architecture _____
_____
_____
_____

Period of Significance
_1959-1965_for Criterion A_____
_1965 for Criterion C_____
_____

Significant Dates
___1959—Construction begins
___1960—First 92 low-rise units completed
___1961—Sculpture wall installed ____
___1961—Final 114 low-rise units completed _
___1963-1965—High-rise and parking garage constructed_____
_____
_____

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
_____
_____
_____

Cultural Affiliation
_____
_____
_____

Architect/Builder
_Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons_____
_Edward Larrabee Barnes_____
_DeMars & Reay _____
_Lawrence Halprin_____
_____
_____

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.)

Capitol Towers, constructed between 1959 and 1965 on most of a four-block area in Sacramento, California, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development as the residential component and inaugural privately-sponsored development in Sacramento's first realized urban redevelopment area, the Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project. The initial construction of 92 garden apartment units, starting in 1959 and completed in 1960, represented the first private investment in Sacramento to replace the "blighted" neighborhoods demolished by the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA) under slum clearance. As SRA's Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project was the first to use tax increment financing, the construction of Capitol Towers was at the forefront of redevelopment in California that would reshape many of the state's urban areas in the second half of the twentieth century.

Capitol Towers is also locally significant under Criterion C as a well-planned and well-designed example of urban redevelopment housing. Not only does its pedestrian-oriented design combine low-rise and high-rise buildings, integrated landscape features, and amenities for its residents, the design also maintains a strong urban presence while balancing privacy and community for its residents. Capitol Towers exhibited thoughtful and people-oriented design and planning features from conception through completion, even as the designers refined the design while adhering to the requirements that came with federal funding. In addition, Capitol Towers was the first redevelopment project constructed by many of its talented design team that included Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, Edward Larrabee Barnes, DeMars & Reay and Lawrence Halprin, and reflects their social and aesthetic philosophies. In particular, Capitol Towers embodies the design and planning approach of WBE applied to a large urban property, and is considered by Lawrence Halprin to be his first urban plaza.

Because the final components of the property, the high-rise tower, and the four-level parking garage were completed in early 1965, the period of significance under Criterion C is 1965. Just a few months shy of the fifty-year mark at the time of nomination, Capitol Towers is effectively fifty years old and Criterion Consideration G does not apply.

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

Constructed in three phases between 1959 and 1965, Capitol Towers occupies most of a four-block area south of Capitol Avenue that was earmarked for multifamily residential housing in Sacramento Redevelopment Agency's 1954 Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project. Developer James Scheuer and a design team consisting of Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons (WBE), Edward Larrabee Barnes, DeMars & Reay, landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, as well as local

Sacramento firm Dreyfuss & Blackford, and New York-based Mayer, Whittlesey & Glass, created a more informal, people-oriented housing complex in contrast to the tower-in-the-park model that had already come to define urban redevelopment housing by the late 1950s. Despite the limits imposed by Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage insurance, the talented team employed thoughtful planning, design, and landscape to realize a highly livable community in the heart of California's capital.

Redevelopment in Sacramento

As suburbanization accelerated in American metropolitan areas in the years after World War II, urban cores drastically diminished in importance as commercial, residential, and business centers. Crowded and unsanitary housing conditions in American cities from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century galvanized reformers to push for "slum clearance," and the situation worsened with the lack of investment during the Great Depression and World War II.[5] In California, the state legislature passed the California Redevelopment Act in 1945 to provide state funds for local improvement projects. The Act allowed a municipality to acquire property deemed "blighted," clear it, and sell or lease it to a private developer to create new uses that complied with the community's general plan and remained in the public interest.[6] However, substantial funding came with the passage of the Federal Housing Act of 1949, which provided two-thirds the cost for slum clearance as well as funding for construction of publicly owned housing.[7]

Sacramento developed an initial redevelopment plan in 1950 focused on the West End, the area stretching from the Sacramento River east to Seventh Street and south of the Southern Pacific Depot to R or S Street.[8] Designed by Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander, the plan called for extensive slum clearance and the construction of high-rise public housing along the riverfront. The project stalled after business interests opposed the public housing component and the relocation of existing residents, including the Chinese community and many single men working as laborers, met resistance.[9]

In 1954, amendments to the Federal Housing Act weakened the link between public housing and redevelopment.[10] This opened the way for commercial uses to play a role in the urban redevelopment process, as well as provide special Federal Housing Administration (FHA)

[5] R. Allen Hays, *The Federal Government & Urban Housing*, (Albany: Sate University of New York Press, 2012), p.166-167.
[6] Ken Lastufka, "Redevelopment of Sacramento's West End, 1950-1970: A Historical Overview with an Analysis of the Impact of Relocation," (MA thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 1985), p. 24-25.
[7] Hays, p. 168 and Seven M. Avella, *Sacramento: Indomitable City* (Charleston SC, Chicago IL, Portsmouth NH, San Francisco CA: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), p.127.
[8] Avella, p.126. A part of old Sacramento, the West End's aging buildings had deteriorated and the area embodied the perception of urban ills with high crime, bars, places of ill-repute, and flop houses. It was also where many single men working as laborers lived, and overlapped with several ethnic neighborhoods. However, to the established powerbrokers, it was a blighted area that was preventing the city from booming and urban redevelopment was an opportunity to remake the area.
[9] William Burg, *Sacramento's K Street: Where Our City Was Born*, (Charleston: The History Press, 2012), p. 133.
[10] Hays, p.169. The 1954 Housing Act also changed the program's name from urban redevelopment to urban renewal. For the sake of consistency, "urban redevelopment" is used throughout this nomination.

mortgage insurance guarantee, initially under Section 220, for private development of multi-family residential housing in urban redevelopments areas.[11]

A new redevelopment plan emerged from the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA), an independent urban redevelopment entity separate from the City of Sacramento. The new plan focused on the Capitol Mall area between the West End and the State Capitol. This plan for the Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project (Project 2-A) encompassed 15 blocks north and south of Capitol Avenue between portions of Third and Eight Streets. The plan assigned new land uses intended for public buildings, parking, commercial, and housing. A four-block area—one block south of Capitol Avenue, between N and P Streets and Fifth and Seventh Streets—was designated for multi-family housing.[12]

In order to tap the federal funds, the City needed to match one-third of the plan's cost. Sacramento attempted to pass a bond measure in 1954 to fund the redevelopment project, but the city's voters rejected it. Instead, SRA used a provision of the state's Community Redevelopment Law for an innovative financing mechanism now known as tax increment financing.[13] Tax increment financing freezes property tax revenue in the redevelopment area at a baseline level for entities other than the redevelopment agency; increases in property tax over the baseline are returned to the redevelopment agency with the assumption that the increase in value was created by the redevelopment agency's investment. This allowed the SRA itself to issue a bond without the need for voter approval, with the expectation that future tax revenues from the increased property values would pay for the bond.[14]

Capitol Towers

Even with the Capitol Mall Project approved and financing secured, SRA spent several years developing and implementing plans for land acquisition, resident relocation, and land clearance, as well as attracting private developers willing to develop projects on the cleared land. SRA selected various developers for different parcels rather than a single developer to take on the entire project area.[15] In 1958, SRA selected New York-based James H. Scheuer and Roger L. Stevens to develop the multi-family housing parcel.[16] As president of Renewal and Development Corporation (RDC), Scheuer had previously developed urban redevelopment housing in cities like Washington, DC, St. Louis, and Cleveland, and he would go on to develop others in San Francisco and San Juan, Puerto Rico around the time of Capitol Towers.[17]

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[11] Hays, p.174.
[12] Tom Arden, "Officials See Completed Plan of Capitol Mall Redevelopment," *Sacramento Bee*, August 27, 1955.
[13] Daniel S. Maroon, "Redevelopment in the Golden State: A Study in Plenary Power under the California Constitution," *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly*, Vol. 40:2, Winter 2013, p.454. http://www.hastingsconlawquarterly.org/archives/V40/Maroon%20Final.pdf
[14] Richard Trainor, *Floor, Fire and Blight: A History of Redevelopment in Sacramento*, (Sacramento: Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency, 1991), p.34-35.
[15] Trainor, p 37 and Allan Temko, "Sacramento's Second Gold Rush," *Architectural Forum*, October 1960, p. 129.
[16] "NY Firm Gets Signal to Start Designing $15,000,000 Mall," *Sacramento Bee*, January 14, 1958. According to Temko, "Sacramento's Second Gold Rush," Stevens, a theater producer and real estate executive, would later withdraw due to heavy commitments elsewhere.
[17] Kurt F. Stone, *The Jews of Capitol Hill: A Compendium of Jewish Congressional Members* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press Inc, 2011), p. 227. Scheuer would be elected to Congress in 1964 representing New York and

Scheuer and his design team presented the design proposal for Capitol Towers in March 1958, "climaxing nearly eight years of preparatory work," by SRA.[18] Expected to be "the first federally assisted residential slum clearance development to be constructed in the western states," the newly named Capitol Towers would have three 15-story towers and two hundred garden apartment units in two- and three-story buildings in a staggered pattern to "give the project a style relieved of architectural monotony."[19] Each apartment would have an outdoor living space, either a balcony or a patio, and near each tower would be a court with a different recreational theme—such as an activity area with a pool, a sunken garden, and a tree-shaded area. Other suggested amenities included a play area with sculptures for children, an outdoor telephone booth disguised as a Parisian kiosk, large sundials, sculptures, and a fountain. A poppy motif in various colors would be carried throughout the development.[20]

The plan was to construct all the garden apartments and one tower first, and then to construct the other two towers as Sacramento's apartment market warranted. While groundbreaking was anticipated later in 1958, the project plans still needed official SRA approval, concurrence by the federal government, and a purchase price that was acceptable to SRA. These approvals and negotiations delayed the start of the project as Scheuer and his team refined the designs to bring the project in line with FHA financing requirements.[21] In the meantime, Scheuer and WBE urged SRA not to approve a street widening plan around the property, as it would uproot more than 90 street trees that they believed would "add greatly to the attractiveness of the project."[22]

The initial phase of 92 low-rise units was built in 1959 and 1960 within the northern half of the superblock and dedicated at the end of 1960. The remainder of the low-rise buildings, 114 units in all, opened in mid-1961, just after the sculpture wall was installed in the central plaza.[23] In March 1963, ground broke for the 15-story high-rise tower, containing 203 units. The four-level parking garage along the east side at Seventh Street was constructed with the high-rise. The tower was dedicated in January 1965, marking the completion of the final significant component of Capitol Towers' distinctive site plan.[24]

In Sacramento as in other American cities, the trend of mass suburbanization that took hold in the postwar period could not be reversed easily, despite the efforts of urban redevelopment to revitalize central cities. The lack of market demand for high-rise housing in downtown Sacramento prevented Scheuer from building the other two high-rise towers at Capitol Towers.

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served for 13 terms until his death in 2005. See Jennifer S. Lee, "James H. Scheuer, 13-Term New York Congressman, Is Dead at 85," *New York Times*, August 31, 2005.

[18] Edward F. Meagher, "Mall Apartment Project Designs Are Presented," *Sacramento Bee*, March 27, 1958.

[19] Meagher, "Mall Apartment Project Designs."

[20] Meagher, "Mall Apartment Project Designs." Some proposed features, such as the sundials and poppy motif, changed or were ultimately not incorporated.

[21] "Scheuer Plans Earlier Mall Towers Start," *Sacramento Bee*, November 17, 1958.

[22] "Mall Redevelopers Act to Save Trees," *Sacramento Bee*, November 17, 1958.

[23] "Tower Project in West End Gets Sculpture," *Sacramento Bee*, April 30, 1961.

[24] "Capitol Towers Apartments Will Dedicate 15 Story Tower Thursday," *Sacramento Bee*, January 10, 1965

Unaffiliated residential towers were constructed on the property's northwest and southwest corners separately in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Over the course of Capitol Towers' construction between 1959 and 1965, progress was being made in the overall Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project. The Federal Building, directly north of the Capitol Towers, started construction in 1959 as well but other private developers did not secured approvals for new developments until the early 1960s after the initial phase of Capitol Towers was completed. The Modern commercial buildings that resulted include the Crocker National Bank, Wells Fargo Bank, and IBM Building on Capitol Mall (or Capitol Avenue) completed between 1963 and 1964, as well as Macy's Department Store anchoring what would become the K Street shopping mall.[25] Other redevelopment project areas also started, and downtown Sacramento continued to redevelop into the 1970s and 1980s.

The completion of Capitol Towers' first phase of 92 low-rise garden apartments in 1960 represented the first private investment in urban redevelopment housing in California and led reinvestment in Sacramento's downtown. Local governments and redevelopment agencies across the state initiated redevelopment in the 1950s with redevelopment plans, land acquisition, resident relocation, and building demolition that often destroyed whole neighborhoods and displaced long-term residents and ethnic communities in order to modernize city centers. Some publicly funded projects such as public housing, government buildings, and cultural institutions were part of the rebuilding, but private developers willing to invest in declining city centers and willing to take on the complicated financing and regulations that came with federal funds, were responsible for the bulk of new construction under urban redevelopment.

The complicated legacy of urban redevelopment often is associated with the destruction of older, established neighborhoods but it also allowed for the construction of modern urban cores that transformed Sacramento and other California cities in the second half of the twentieth century. Starting with its construction in 1959 as the first privately-developed project in Sacramento's urban redevelopment efforts through the 1965 completion of the high-rise tower, Capitol Towers provide the residential housing component in Sacramento's first redevelopment project area and meets Criterion A at the local level of significance.

Design of Capitol Towers

Capitol Towers is significant under Criterion C as a well-planned urban redevelopment project designed by a team of highly trained and nationally influential Modernist architects and landscape architects. The design of the property expresses the social and aesthetic philosophies of its collaborating designers, who would continue to develop these ideas in subsequent urban projects. In particular, Capitol Towers embodies WBE′s design and planning approach large urban lots and is considered by Lawrence Halprin to be his first urban plaza.

[25] Sacramento Redevelopment Agency, *Urban Renewal, Sacramento*, (Sacramento: Sacramento Redevelopment Agency, 1964), p. 12-19 and Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency, "Annual Report by Redevelopment Agencies as Required by State Law," April 9, 1980, p.42.

A modernized, urban version of a garden apartment complex, Capitol Towers adapts aspects of the Garden City Movement and Le Corbusier's Ideal City to re-image a different way of urban living (discussed below). As lead firm WBE described Capitol Towers,

> [T]he design was conceived as a pedestrian-oriented residential project. High-and low-rise units are clustered about a mall, providing an informal, yet orderly, interplay of vertical and horizontal building masses. A park-like atmosphere is created by the retention of magnificent old trees; enhanced by extensive lawns, plantings, and specially–designed street furniture; and is preserved by restricting parking to islands surrounded by service areas.[26]

In a highly collaborative process, WBE, DeMars & Reay, and Edward Larrabee Barnes contributed to the design of Capitol Towers with a host of consultants.[27] They included:

- Mayer, Whittlesey and Glass, architecture and planning (New York)
- Dreyfuss & Blackford, architecture (Sacramento)
- Nathaniel S. Keith, housing
- Lawrence Halprin, landscape architecture
- DeLeuw, Cather & Company, engineering
- William B. Gilbert, engineering

Barnes took the lead on designing the low-rise buildings, while WBE became principal architect for the high-rise tower. Donn Emmons was the partner in charge at WBE, though all three partners were engaged in the early schematic designs. DeMars & Reay and Mayer, Whittlesey and Glass, with their experiences in mass housing, were involved in the early site layout and planning. Ideas and designs went back and forth among those who were local in the Bay Area (WBE, DeMars & Reay, and Halprin primarily) and in New York (Barnes and Mayer, Whittlesey and Glass in the initial concepts).[28]

Even after the initial concept was released in 1958 featuring staggered low-rise buildings with three high-rise towers on a superblock with parking at the periphery, the team continued to refine and discuss design elements, particularly in light of FHA requirements for room count, rent affordability, and loan terms. The largest change came from Dreyfuss & Blackford, who reoriented the high-rises from a north-south longitudinal axis to an east-west axis. Familiar with the local natural environment, the Sacramento-based associate architecture firm cautioned against expanses of glass on western exposures that would create uncomfortable conditions in Sacramento's hot summers. After discussions about northern exposures in winter months and the cost savings from reduced air conditioning loads, the design was changed to the final plan.

[26] Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, *Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, Inc., Architects* (San Francisco, CA: Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, Inc., 1967), p. 30.
[27] See Correspondence 1957-58, 1958-60 folders in "Sacramento Redevelopment: Capitol Towers," William W. Wurster/Wurster, Bernardi, & Emmons Collection, (1976-2), Environmental Design Archives, College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, California.
[28] Correspondence 1957-1958 folder, "Sacramento Redevelopment: Capitol Towers," WBE Collection.

In addition to saving some of the street trees, Lawrence Halprin also retained some of the mature trees on the property to incorporate into Capitol Towers. [29] For the central plaza, Halprin included a grove of trees (appear to be London plane trees or Platanus x acerifolia), distinctive deciduous trees that provide a low canopy during the summer months and add vibrancy with color, texture, and shadow. This urban design element used in combination with a water fountain was used in Halprin's later highly acclaimed designs for University of California's Sproul Plaza in 1962 and Lovejoy Fountain Park in Portland, Oregon in 1966.[30] Other locations in Sacramento feature variations of this Modern-era sensibility, including the Sacramento County Courthouse at Ninth and G Streets built in 1965.

To unify the Capitol Towers property and complement the landscape design, Halprin specifically designed a set of street furniture for the project, including a globe light standard, wood-slat benches with curved backs, kiosks, and trash cans. He worked with graphic designer Saul Bass and designer Alexander Girard on graphics and a color scheme, as well as with artist Jacques Overhoff on the sculpture wall in the central plaza. [31]

Capitol Towers as Urban Development Housing

As initiated by Ebenezer Howard in England in the late nineteenth century and popularized in the United States by progressive housing reformers such as Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, and William Wurster's wife Catherine Bauer in the first half of the twentieth century, Garden City principles focused on removing the city grid and creating superblocks with low- and mid-rise housing clustered around shared, park-like open spaces. Pedestrian and automobile uses were separated with automobiles confined to the periphery and through streets minimized to allow for safe, pedestrian-only interior spaces. Seen mainly as an alternative to overcrowded urban living, examples of communities using Garden City principles often were located in satellite or suburban areas and inwardly oriented.[32]

With Modern architect Le Corbusier′s 1920s theory of the "Ideal City," where free-standing towers were set in blocks of open space, the superblock configuration was also used with separated pedestrian and automobile circulation. Standardized, modern, high-rise towers provided the necessary residential density in limited footprints so that much of the ground plane could be used for open space with sufficient light, air, and greenery often lacking in the crowded nineteenth century city.[33] Also distinct from the city street grid, this more cost-effective "towers in the park" model come to dominate postwar urban redevelopment housing with mixed success.

[29] Sacramento Redevelopment Correspondence (014.I.A.6000) from Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
[30] United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Halprin Open Space Sequence, March 6, 2013.
[31] Sacramento Redevelopment Correspondence (014.I.A.6000), Lawrence Halprin Collection. Originally, Bass and Girard had larger roles in the project, but time demands and cost cutting measures reduced the scopes of their work. It is not clear how much of their work remains at the site.
[32] Page & Turnbull, "Parkmerced Historic Resource Evaluation & Cultural Landscape Assessment," November 13, 2009, p. 22-23.
[33] Page & Turnbull, pl. 23-24.

Capitol Towers' developer James Scheuer articulated his thoughts about urban redevelopment housing in a letter to the *New York Times* in July 1958. His letter encapsulates the mission statement of Capitol Towers, the plans of which had been released in March that year and was in process of design refinement and FHA approvals. In response to an article denouncing urban redevelopment projects in New York as "bleak towers" and "box-like buildings, no better than the slums they replaced," Scheuer agreed that redevelopment projects have "for the most part the uniformity of barracks and are painfully devoid of imagination."[34] Scheuer continues,

> We have now been warned that unless urban renewal is radically improved it will die aborning through lack of public support. The public will simply refuse to make the necessary capital investment, not only in terms of money but in terms of the inconvenience and dislocation which are unavoidable costs of redevelopment.
>
> There is no reason why redevelopment projects cannot be exciting and attractive. Why must all buildings in a project be identical? Tall structures can be combined with medium and low structures. Where land costs make them feasible, a small number of two or three story garden apartments can add informality and the human dimension to projects.
>
> When we erect high-rise apartment houses, slab buildings can be combined with tower structures. And they can be staggered rather than lined up like soldiers on parade.
>
> Swimming pools, reflecting pools, imaginative playground facilities, trees, shrubs, fountains, sun dials and sculpture can be used to make developments attractive places to live. Why not break away from the conventional red brick by varying the color and texture of the building materials? Why not employ a variety of window, façade, and entrance treatments?
>
> We should get away from the enormous projects of the past, projects which are a thing apart from the neighborhood and not of it. Let us plan "vest-pocket" projects, combining public housing units, cooperative, limited-profit buildings and upper-income Title I housing. This would vary the tenants as well as the structures, making projects more interesting places in which to live.
>
> Fortunately, the picture is not entirely black. In various United States cities some of America's most talented architects are involved in urban renewal. Within a year a great deal of their work will be finished, showing what can be done if only we set about to do the job with style and imagination.[35]

As constructed, Capitol Towers embodies Scheuer's vision of "style and imagination" for urban redevelopment housing. While it is not the only project to incorporate low-rise apartment

[34] James H. Scheuer, "Letters to the Times: To Beautify Housing," The New York Times, July 8, 1958.
[35] Scheuer, "Letters to the Times: To Beautify Housing."

buildings and high-rise residential towers, the collaborative planning, rich and layered site design, and spatial relationships at Capitol Towers, working in concert with the urban setting, resulted in a "more interesting place[s] in which to live," and a compelling early example of redevelopment housing in California. .

The spatial relationships between the low-rise and the high-rise building create a comfortable density that avoids enormous stretches of vast emptiness seen in some "towers in the park" developments. The park-like setting is created through a variety of proportionally-scaled spaces for private uses, shared lawns, quiet courtyards, communal gathering, and recreational use. Taken in concert with the Halprin-design street furniture, hardscape pathways and landscape features, the property comes together into a cohesive, balanced whole.

For the residents, privacy and community are balanced. Clearly defined patios to the rear of residential units and balconies overlooking the internal walkways and city sidewalks offer them private outdoor spaces. Community amenities, such as the swimming pool, central plaza, and ground-floor shops in the high-rise tower, provide gathering areas for residents, while the connected lawns in front of the garden apartment buildings offer areas shared among immediate neighbors. These designed spaces were intended to demonstrate the possibilities of rich and diverse communal interaction through a landscaped, pedestrian-oriented setting inserted into an urban core area. The project served as an early and highly regarded demonstration of both interactive public space connected with the city circulation, and a respite for the core residential community.

As a matter of its Modern design as well as a budget limited by FHA requirements, the buildings are simply and subtly detailed. The low-rise buildings are staggered to prevent straight, monotonous blocks of units. Breezeways between modules create permeable spaces for natural breezes, views, and pedestrian circulation. Simple design details, such as the uniformly deep eaves and the wood-slat sunshades over the patio doors, not only create architectural accents and visual consistency but they also provide functional sun protection and dynamic shading throughout the property. Such details, along with the unusual casement windows with lower panes that form almost full-height glazing and private outdoor areas for each unit, add to the visual interest and livability of the units.

The high-rise tower, one of the earliest by WBE, is similarly modest in detail but avoids flatness and monotony. Though the windows, sliding glass doors, and concrete balconies are consistent on the two long sides (north and south façade s), they have different bay patterns for visual interest. The projecting penthouse balcony gives the building a top, almost in the traditional base-shaft-top organization seen in Classical and New Formalist buildings. The base of the high-rise is partially open and recessed to create a sense of lightness and reception. The resulting colonnade offers a shaded walkway to access the neighborhood-serving retail and restaurants.

As much as Capitol Towers is a self-contained, pedestrian-oriented property, it remains open, permeable, and complementary to the larger urban context. At the northeast and southeast corners, the low-rises present a street-facing presence to engage the property with the

surrounding streets, which is unlike earlier larger-scaled garden apartment complexes that emphasized an internal orientation as an escape from the city. Similarly, the main north-south and east-west pedestrian axes at Capitol Towers generally continue the urban sidewalk grid, rather than create a new circulation pattern. The low-rise buildings and its balconies internally face the main pedestrian walks as on a city street, and the open and welcoming pedestrian entrances at the west, north, and south allow residents and non-residents alike to walk through the development and reconnect with the street grid.

The parking areas, a necessity by the late 1950s, also reinforce the urbanity of the property. While they are placed at the edges so that Capitol Towers can have open, car-free internal spaces, the surface parking areas are tucked into interior courts and accessed from the streets by narrow driveway curb cuts. They are surrounded by low-rise apartment buildings to allow residents convenient access to cars while limiting barrier elements at interfaces with the city to the parking garage and surface lot on Seventh Street.[36]

Recognition for Capitol Towers

Before construction started, as the design was undergoing refinements by the project team, the essential concepts of Capitol Towers received national recognition. Most significantly, the project received the First Design Award from *Progressive Architecture*'s Annual Design Awards Program in early 1959.[37] The First Design Award was the highest honor recognizing a single project from a pool of over six hundred submissions. The Capitol Towers project also rose above almost thirty projects that received Award Citations and Design Awards. The jury, which consisted of architects Hugh Stubbins (chair), Ladislav Rado, Philip Will, Minoru Yamasaki, and engineer Milo S. Ketchum, were "looking for a clear architectural expression; something that contributes to development of this expression."[38] In selecting Capitol Towers, the jury recognized that the proposed design was different from what was being built under urban redevelopment elsewhere.

> At a time when Urban Redevelopment is much in the public consciousness, and both proposals and finished projects are daily news items, it is hoped that this First Design Award will arrest the attention of architects, planners, developers, civic officials, and all others concerned with rebuilding our cities. This project, prepared with unusual care, should stimulate reflection, stock-taking, and thorough study… Unlike most current projects in which use, coverage, and density are rigidly prescribed for the planners, the program, in this case, was jointly developed by the Redevelopment Agency, the private developers, their architects and consultants. Thus, an earlier proposal of an all-high-rise project has been replaced by a design which encompasses both high- and low-rise units and places particular emphasis on intensive ground-use,

[36] The property's surface parking lots on Fifth Street are adjacent to parking facilities for Bridgeway Tower and Pioneer II, which are on separate parcels and developed after Capitol Towers.
[37] "P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards," *Progressive Architecture*, January 1959, p.105-111.
[38] "P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards," p.105.

> on the separation of pedestrian and vehicular ways, and the shaping of exterior spaces.[39]

The award description particularly called out the parking in cul-de-sacs that leaves the interior of the property free of vehicular traffic, the privacy afforded tenants with the balconies and patios oriented in opposite directions, the staggering of the apartments "[t]o further the visual interest even more, and to increase the amount of privacy," and the use of breezeways at the points where apartments are offset. According to the jury, "In this way, the architects have been able to maintain the urban character of the closed square while ventilating the courts."[40]

> [T]he Jury was particularly pleased with the informal, yet orderly interplay of the vertical and horizontal building masses; the excellent use of the grounds; the ingenious design of the low-rise units, which are both economical and livable; and the solution of the parking element. Unanimously, the Jurors considered this project an important piece of work and a highly sensitive design—one which stood above all the others for qualities that went well beyond mere function.[41]

With the exception of the two high-rise towers and more vibrant use of color, most of what the *Progressive Architecture* award recognized was realized in the built work, even as the towers were re-oriented to better address Sacramento's summer heat.

Upon completion of the low-rise apartment buildings, Capitol Towers received a Merit Award from the Northern California chapter of the American Institute of Architects' Honor Awards Program in 1963. The award citation noted, "Maximum advantage was taken of the park-like atmosphere of the property by creating a central core exclusively for pedestrians in this apartment complex."[42] The jury commented,

> A most handsome solution to an extremely difficult and important architectural problem. Many times mass housing in this income bracket becomes a hard-boiled, inhuman concept. The fine separation of the occupancy from the automobile is most commendable, and all the jury agreed that from the pedestrian viewpoint—the gardens, the plaza furniture, and the recreational spaces were most successful. A comfortable and simple transition from the private residential living to public housing.[43]

Capitol Towers also won a First Honor Award from the Urban Renewal Administration as part of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) Awards Program in 1964 and a Certificate

[39] "P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards," p.107-109. The initial Sacramento redevelopment plan by Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander had received a Special Design Award from *Progressive Architecture* in 1955.
[40] "P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards," p.110-11.
[41] "P/A Sixth Annual Design Awards," p.111.
[42] "San Francisco Bay Region A.I.A. Awards," *Arts & Architecture*, May 1963, p.28.
[43] "San Francisco Bay Region A.I.A. Awards," p.28. It does not appear that the reference to "public housing" was intended to mean publicly -owned housing.

of Excellence from the Governor's Design Awards Program in 1966.[44] The Advisory Committee for the Urban Renewal Administration award "remarked on the subtle yet rich landscape design as greatly enhancing the site and the simple, direct structures. Good site planning thus resulted in well-scaled open spaces. There seemed to be an effective program of design of street furniture, lighting fixtures, benches, etc."[45]

Capitol Towers was among the most recognized projects designed for Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons as well as the other designers on the team.

Architects and Designers

Capitol Towers was a collaboration among a talented, nationally renowned team of master designers. It was an early opportunity to develop their ideas and approaches to reimagining an urban lot just as American city centers were being reconsidered and reconceived. Capitol Towers was an important transitional project particularly for WBE and Lawrence Halprin to test their social, aesthetic, and planning philosophies on a larger, urban property.

Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons

Principal William Wurster (1895-1973) first established his own firm in 1924 in Berkeley and focused primarily on residential projects in the popular period revival styles of the era. Through key projects and clients like the Gregory Farmhouse for Warren and Sadie Gregory in Scotts Valley (north of Santa Cruz, 1928), Wurster experimented with vernacular styles that were unassuming yet closely linked to the surrounding natural environment. Such understated approaches, in contrast to the more formal, grand designs expected of the wealthy, "fully embodied the values of a monied California society intent on living unostentatiously and close to the land."[46]

Additional residential commissions for friends of clients like the Gregorys in San Francisco and throughout the rural and suburban Bay Area further developed Wurster's reputation and ideas of California living, with its emphasis on casualness and outdoor living. His interest in landscape led to a prolific collaboration with landscape architect Thomas Church (1902-1978), a pioneer of modern California landscape design.

By the mid-1930s, Wurster's practice was firmly established as the International Style and European Modernism started to appear in the Bay Area. With younger architects like Theodore Bernardi (1903-1990) bringing more progressive ideas about modernism to the firm, and Wurster's own travels to Europe in the 1930s, projects in the 1940s started to reflect modernist features of crisps lines, rectilinear volumes, expanses of glazing, and lower pitched roofs. The projects remained responsive to individual properties and did not abandon the needs of clients in favor of architectural doctrine.

[44] Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, p.30.
[45] "Redevelopment Design Award—Residential: Capitol Towers Garden Apartments," *URA 1964 Honor Awards Program in Urban Renewal Design*, Urban Renewal Administration, Housing and Home Finance Agency.
[46] Marc Treib, "William Wilson Wurster: The Feeling of Function," in Marc Treib, ed., *An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster*, (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and University of California Press, 1995), p. 19.

The firm produced numerous residential projects in the late 1930s to 1950s as it became first Wurster and Bernardi in 1944 and finally Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons (WBE) with Donn Emmons (1910-1997) becoming a partner in 1945. It was the projects of this period, along with fellow Bay Area architects Gardner Dailey and John Ekin Dinwiddie that came to define the regional variant on Modernism known as Bay Region Modernism.

Wurster's interests expanded into urban planning and mass housing in the 1940s, first with his marriage to noted urban planning and progressive housing expert Catherine Bauer in 1941 and his involvement with World War II defense housing projects also in 1941. In 1943, Wurster and Bauer move to the East Coast for Wurster to study urban planning at Harvard. He would remain on the East Coast once he was appointed dean of the architecture school at MIT in 1944. Bernardi and Emmons took on the bulk of the firm's design work back in San Francisco, even upon Wurster's returned to the Bay Area in 1950 to serve as the dean for the architecture school at UC Berkeley. Deeply influenced by Wurster's "pragmatic regionally based design philosophy," Bernardi and Emmons continued Wurster's example of allowing the clients to lead the design process rather than impose the firm's design ideals as the firm grew in the 1950s.

WBE continued to design single-family residential projects into the 1960s, but those diminished as larger educational, commercial, and redevelopment commissions came into the firm. These ranged from the award-winning Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences (1954) at Stanford University to the prototype, and subsequent models, of the brand-defining, Marina-style Safeway grocery stores (1954-63) that proliferated across California. Starting in the late 1950s, the firm became involved with major urban renewal master planned and mixed used projects in Northern California like Capitol Towers (1958-65) in Sacramento and Golden Gateway Redevelopment (1960-67) in San Francisco. The firm's other notable projects in San Francisco include the adaptive reuse and remodeling of Ghirardelli Square (1963-65) and the Bank of America headquarters (1965-77) with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

Capitol Towers was among the projects that helped WBE transition from single-family residential and commercial commissions like the Safeway stores, to larger-scaled projects. The firm had worked on a number of university campus planning projects, as well as individual college buildings in the 1950s. Capitol Towers was an opportunity to engage with an urban site and implement the social and urban planning philosophies that interested Wurster and the other partners. As with their regional variant on Modernism, WBE did not follow the common trend for urban redevelopment housing design. Instead of International Style towers in a superblock of open space, WBE incorporate key elements of their regional modernism at Capitol Towers through the spatial arrangement, scale, and volumetric forms of buildings to create visual interest and define spaces, integrated landscape design as a key component, and incorporated natural materials such as wood as design accents while adhering to the demands of FHA regulations. WBE led the Capitol Towers design team in creating a more imaginative, humane alternative that embodied Garden City principles balanced with urbanity, mixed private and communal spaces, integrated modern landscapes, and the human experience. WBE would continue to develop these concepts in subsequent urban projects like the Golden Gateway Redevelopment

Project and Ghirardelli Square. Capitol Towers was one of 12 projects that WBE profiled in their 1967 company brochure highlighting the firm's significant larger projects.[47]

Lawrence Halprin

Lawrence Halprin (1916-2009) is one of the most prolific American landscape architects of the postwar years. His approach, methodology, and compositions have left a resonating impact upon numerous urban spaces not only throughout the United States, but across the world. He was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1916 and attended Cornell University and the University of Wisconsin, Madison as a horticulture student. From 1942 to 1944, he attended the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, where he studied under prominent designers Marcel Breuer and Walter Gropius, who were famous for spreading the influence of the Bauhaus school and early international modernism. At Harvard he met and befriended William Wurster who was on sabbatical at Harvard studying urban planning.[48]

Following his completion of the program and active duty during World War II, Halprin arrived in San Francisco, where his contact with Wurster landed him employment with Thomas Church, a prominent and innovative Modern landscape architect. Halprin worked with Church on several projects, including the acclaimed Donnell Garden in Sonoma, California, which became an early Modern masterpiece that embodied the casual, indoor-outdoor California lifestyle. In 1949, Halprin established his own practice focused primarily on residential gardens, of which he designed over 300 between 1949 and 1961. By the mid-1950s, Halprin's practice expanded from residential projects to include commercial work such as shopping centers, where his sequences of space for pedestrian movement as well as uses of concrete, fountains, and custom furnishings would be echoed in later civic and urban projects.[49]

The years between 1956 and 1961 marked a period of "enormous personal, intellectual, artistic, and professional growth," for Halprin that prefaced the signature projects for which his is known today.[50] In addition to the shopping centers, Halprin also started to design larger-scale projects such as university campus plans, like for the UC Berkeley, that were more intricate and needed additional designs for street furniture, signage, lighting, paving, and parking. This led to greater interest in urban spaces and plazas that he explored in his book 1963 *Cities*.

Two additional key themes emerged in Halprin's work starting in the 1960s: the natural environment and movement through spaces. Shaped by the hiking trips in the Sierra Nevada Mountains Halprin undertook in the late 1950s, nature became a common source of inspiration for many of his designs, albeit abstracted and expressed through modern and austere materials like concrete. Also solidifying in these years was the notion of movement, an appreciation gained from his wife, Anna, who was a professional modern dancer. Halprin developed movement plans or "scores" that were part methodical analysis and part choreographic compositions of how

[47]Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, p. 30-31.
[48] Lawrence Halprin, *A Life Spent Changing Places*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p.47-8.
[49] Laurie Olin, "Introduction," in Lawrence Halprin, *A Life Spent Changing Places*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p.ix-x.
[50] Olin, p.xi-x.

people interact with a series of spaces and the typological elements therein. Halprin considered issues such as pedestrian circulation, rest areas, contrasts of noise volume, perspective views, access to daylight, and user experience. These scores became fundamental to the RSVP Cycle, a design and community participation process that he developed throughout the 1960s focused on the people who would use the spaces.[51]

Experimenting with these ideas, Halprin's most prominent works started to come in the 1960s. In addition to the groundbreaking seaside housing community of Sea Ranch (1962-67) in Sonoma County, CA, Halprin's best known works include several urban project like the Ghirardelli Square development (1963-65) with WBE in San Francisco, CA; Nicollet Avenue Mall (1967) in Minneapolis; and several public parks and civic spaces for local redevelopment agencies including the Portland Open Space Sequence (1965-78) in Portland, OR (listed in the National Register in 2013); Skyline Park (1975, demolished 2003) in Denver, CO; and Seattle Freeway Park (1976), Seattle, WA. These projects, and dozens of other urban projects, re-imaged a public realm for the American cities in the aftermath of urban renewal and at times included bold, striking forms and sequences that referenced ecological features like rock croppings or waterfalls.[52] Toward the end of his career, Halprin designed and completed the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (1997) in Washington, D.C.

Halprin's long career is defined by his commitment to the human scale, user experience, and social impact of design.[53] Capitol Towers is from the late 1950s transitional period when larger-scaled projects came to his firm. It combined his experience with residential projects, a growing interest in urban spaces and the ideas of movement. As he recalled about 1957,

> We were also doing some early urban housing in Sacramento with architects Edward Larrabee Barnes and Bill Wurster. I was now working closely with some world-class architects and I was getting a great deal of experience. I designed my first urban plaza at the center of the Sacramento project, and brought in the sculptor Jacques Overhoff to work on an enclosing cast concrete wall. I was developing street details for these larger commissions and I was learning about graphics from the great graphic designer Saul Bass, who was collaborating on some of these projects.[54]

Halprin extensively featured the benches, light standards, and other street furniture he designed for Capitol Towers in *Cities* and included a notional system evaluating "the walking experience," through Capitol Towers as an example of considering the pedestrian's "kinesthetic experience."[55]

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[51] RSVP stands for "Resources, Scores, Valuation and Performance," which is a holistic interpretation of a space that includes existing resources and conditions, potential interactions with these conditions, the revision and interpretation of interactions with the space, and the actions over time within the space.
[52] Elizabeth K. Meyer, "Biography of Lawrence Halprin," The Cultural Landscape Foundation, April 1, 2008, accessed August 8, 2014 http://tclf.org/pioneer/lawrence-halprin/biography-lawrence-halprin.
[53] "Lawrence Halprin," The Cultural Landscape Foundation, accessed August 8, 2014, http://tclf.org/pioneer/lawrence-halprin.
[54] Halprin, *A Life Spent Changing Places*, p.108.
[55] Lawrence Halprin, *Cities*, Revised edition, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972), p.212-3.

The Capitol Towers analysis demonstrates that Halprin was already considering the experience of movement as part of his design process later codified into the RSVP Cycle.

Halprin was known for his work in public urban plazas, often as part of larger urban redevelopment projects that came following Capitol Towers. As was stated in the 2013 National Register nomination for Halprin's Open Space Sequence in Portland, OR,

> Halprin's particular contribution was to reinvent the public plaza as a symbolic yet interactive place... The timing of this reinvention was critical; Halprin's projects were often a core element of revitalizing what were then considered dying city cores. Put another way by landscape architect Laurie Olin, "Larry was working at a time when no one believed in public spaces… No one did it with such bravura and sense of generosity.[56]

Capitol Towers was an early large-scale and urban project for Halprin, and reflects aspects of his initial thoughts and approaches to designing spaces for cities.

Edward Larrabee Barnes

Edward Larrabee Barnes (1915-2004) studied architecture at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design in the 1940s and worked in the office of early Modern Movement masters Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer after graduation. After a stint as a naval architect in San Francisco during World War II, Barnes landed positions in prominent California firms, working first for William Wurster and later for Henry Dreyfuss, who was working on developing mass-production housing types.[57] While with Dreyfuss, Barnes experimented with modern architectural forms, theories, and manufacturing techniques to address the bourgeoning demand for housing that developed in the post-war years. These experiences would benefit Barnes while he worked on two large housing redevelopment projects: Capitol Towers Apartments in Sacramento, CA, and El Monte in San Juan, Puerto Rico, both for developer James Scheuer.

Barnes established his own practice in New York in 1948, starting with residential projects and growing to larger commercial and institutional commissions in the 1960s through the 1980s. Architectural critics have argued that Barnes' personal style was the absence of one. His various projects—private residences, academic buildings, campus plans, commercial towers, churches, museums, and housing developments—responded to modernist ideals and a participatory democratic environment, lacking monumental reference to the architect, or those who commissioned the building.[58] His approach addressed a site comprehensively—context, landscape, client needs, regulations, budget, aesthetics, projective image, structural systems, climate, etc.—and reflected his modernist ideals and education. Some of his most celebrated works include the Haystack Mountain School of Arts (1962), Deer Isle, ME; IBM, 590 Madison

[56] John M. Tess, Heritage Consulting Group, "Halprin Open Space Sequence," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, prepared November 17, 2012, listed March 6, 2013.
[57] Summarized from Edward L. Barnes, *Edward Larrabee Barnes: Architect* (New York: Rizzioli International Publications Inc., 1994), p. 10-21.
[58] Douglas Martin, "Edward Larrabee Barnes, Modern Architect, Dies at 89," *New York Times* (September 23, 2004)

Ave (1983), New York, NY; Dallas Museum of Art (1984), Dallas, TX; and Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center (1990), Los Angeles, CA.

Though simpler and less formal than his later works, Capitol Towers was an early large project for Barnes and an opportunity to work with Wurster and WBE again. Similar to the other designers on the team, Barnes was not preoccupied with monumental architecture or designs adhering to architectural styles. He embraced the complex factors and social issues that could be addressed through modern architecture. While he is credited with the low-rise buildings' staggered plan and opposite orientation of patios and balconies, he was also part of the collaborative effort that saw suggestions and ideas go back and forth among the design team.

DeMars& Reay

Born in San Francisco, Vernon DeMars (1908-2005) received his Bachelors of Architecture from UC Berkeley in 1931 amidst the socio-economic turmoil of the Great Depression. With limited opportunities, DeMars acquired a job with the National Park Service, which eventually led to the position of Chief Architect of the Western Division of the Farm Security Administration (FSA), a government organization that was established through the Roosevelt administration's New Deal policies. DeMars oversaw the planning, designing, and building of forty communities from 1937 to 1943 for the FSA, which focused on providing for the populations of migrant agricultural workers. These communities were meant to be quick to assemble and cheap to build, but socially adequate and culturally responsive to the drastic stresses and difficulties that were experienced by these displaced and transient populations.[59] Following this experience, DeMars began working for the National Housing Agency (NHA) in Washington DC as Chief of Housing Standards, where he was involved in researching potential post-war housing options.[60]

In the immediate postwar years, DeMars was invited to teach at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) by William Wurster, a fellow San Francisco architect who was then the dean of the School of Architecture. DeMars continued to be involved with multi-family housing development and design while at MIT, assisting in the design of the acclaimed Eastgate Apartments located at MIT.[61] In 1950, DeMars and his wife, Betty Bates, moved back to the Bay Area, where he began teaching at the University of California Berkeley and would continue to do so until his retirement in 1975. Also, upon reestablishing himself in the Bay Area, DeMars became very involved in numerous housing projects, most notably the Easter Hill Village public housing development in Richmond, California, which he developed in 1954 with landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. DeMars and architect Donald P. Reay established their own firm DeMars & Reay in 1955. The firm specialized in housing and community development, and addressed countless planning and design issues in the hopes of creating viable and socially

[59] Paul Heyer, *Architects on Architecture*, (New York: Walker and Co., 1966), p. 96.
[60] Laura Ward et al, "Inventory of the Vernon DeMars Collection: 1933-2005," in Environmental Design Archives-College of Environmental Design (Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley, 2008), 3, accessed June 26, 2014, http://pdf.oac.cdlib.org/pdf/berkeley/ceda/demars.pdf
[61] Richard Peters and Henry Lagorio, "In Memorium: Vernon Armand DeMars - Professor of Architecture, Emeritus," University of California Academic Senate, accessed June 26, 2014, http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/inmemoriam/vernonarmanddemars.htm.

responsible communities through comprehensive planning and the exploration of different building types and forms.[62]

DeMars stressed the importance of diversity as a fundamental component to successful communities. Diversity in building types not only provided a number of different practical and functional purposes, but provided aesthetic variation within a development. DeMars recognized the monotony and the utilitarian aesthetic inherent within the housing projects of the day and sought to avoid this in his projects. The mixture of building types, density, scale, building arrangements, and spatial organization, while possessing enough architectural aesthetic continuity became trademarks of DeMars projects. This combination of diverse environmental design and comprehensive design were integral to his theory of "planned chaos."[63]

In addition to DeMars' mass housing experience, the firm also constructed a number of buildings at UC Berkeley, including the Student Center, Zellerbach Hall, and Wurster Hall in the 1960s; and designed the Golden Gateway Redevelopment Project with WBE in the early 1960s. At Capitol Towers, DeMars and Reay were involved with the initial site planning in 1958 and likely contributed their experience with mass housing, community planning and federal agencies to the design team.

WBE, DeMars & Reay, and Halprin were part of the architectural community in San Francisco and had personal as well as working relationships primarily through William Wurster. Edward Larrabee Barnes also had connection to Wurster and WBE, as he worked in the WBE office after World War II. All of the principal designers involved shared a philosophy that architecture was not about style or orthodoxy, but designing for the human experience. That philosophy is seen in the design and planning of Capitol Towers, and further explored in subsequent urban projects in collaborations by these firms.

WBE and DeMars & Reay would go on to design the Golden Gateway Redevelopment Project in San Francisco, constructed in the early to mid-1960s, which also includes low-rise and high-rise residential buildings along with commercial office and retail spaces and an elevated landscape plaza. Lawrence Halprin designed the landscape at St. Francis Square, a 1963 cooperative housing development in San Francisco's Western Addition redevelopment area. WBE and Halprin also collaborated on Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco in the 1960s. With this project, counter to the wholescale demolition that defined urban redevelopment and urban renewal, WBE and Halprin adaptively reused existing buildings and added modern interventions.

Conclusion

Built by a team of talented ground-breaking modern designers and an experienced developer, Capitol Towers is locally significant as a successful example of urban redevelopment housing from the mid-twentieth century. It meets Criterion A as the first privately-sponsored urban redevelopment project to start construction within Sacramento and as the initial residential

[62] Ward, "Inventory of the Vernon DeMars Collection: 1933-2005."
[63] Peters and Lagorio, "In Memorium"

component of the Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project. Capitol Towers served as an early precedent for future redevelopment projects in the state, particularly with housing, that defied national trends for the type and instead incorporated low-rises garden apartments, a high-rise tower, and integrated Modern landscapes.

Capitol Towers also meets Criterion C as an admirable example of urban redevelopment housing that uses thoughtful site planning, landscape design, and urban planning principles to create a livable community despite the constraints of federal requirements that often limited design options. As an early urban redevelopment project for its master designers, Capitol Towers was an important project for them individually and collectively to test their social and aesthetic philosophies for reimaging urban centers. While a collaborative project, Capitol Towers embodies the thoughtful design and planning approach of WBE, as well as preliminary exploration by Lawrence Halprin with urban plazas and spaces.

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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
_X__ University
_X__ Other
Name of repository: _ Center for Sacramento History; Sacramento Public Library; William W. Wurster/Wurster, Bernari & Emmons Collection, College of Environmental Design, University of California, Berkeley; Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania; _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __ approx. 10.2 acres _____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.576887 Longitude: -121.499524
2. Latitude: 38.574826 Longitude: -121.500413
3. Latitude: 38.575150 Longitude: -121.501630
4. Latitude: 38.576086 Longitude: -121.502649
5. Latitude: 38.576984 Longitude: -121.502259
6. Latitude: 38.577264 Longitude: -121.500853

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

The property boundaries correspond to three legal parcels with the Sacramento County Assessor Parcel Numbers: 006-0300-002, 006-0300-003, and 006-0300-004.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries for Capitol Towers was selected based on the three legal parcels that currently comprise the property. These parcels correspond to the original construction of Capitol Towers from 1959 to 1965 and exclude the two parcels on the superblock that were developed separately and at later dates.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Flora Chou, Cultural Resources Planner
organization: Page & Turnbull
street & number: 417 South Hill Street, Suite 211
city or town: Los Angeles state: CA zip code: 90013
e-mail chou@page-turnbull.com
telephone: 213-221-1202
date: July 2, 2014, revised August 15, 2014

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.)

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: Capitol Towers

City or Vicinity: Sacramento

County: Sacramento State: CA

Photographer: Page & Turnbull

Date Photographed: April 9, 2014, except 0001 and 0003 on June 4, 2014 and 0002 taken on August 13, 2014.

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

PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION/VIEW
0001	Main pedestrian entrance to Capitol Towers from Fifth Street at the property's western border, camera facing southeast.
0002	Pedestrian walkway entrance from N Street at the property's northern border flanked by Capitol Towers' street-fronting low-rise garden apartments and the adjacent property's Bridgeway Tower, camera facing southeast.
0003	Capitol Towers at the corner of N Street and Seventh Street with the low-rise apartment buildings along the streets and the high-rise tower in the background, camera facing southwest.
0004	Low-rise garden apartments, landscaping, and mature trees along Capitol Towers' eastern border at Seventh Street, camera facing south.
0005	Typical low-rise garden apartment building lining interior walkways with staggered unit modules, continuous roof and deep eaves, camera facing northeast.
0006	Front of typical low-rise garden apartment building with balconies overlooking interior open spaces, a breezeway between staggered unit modules and a three-story module at the end, camera facing east.

0007 Typical breezeway between unit modules in low-rise garden apartment buildings, camera facing east.

0008 Rear of typical low-rise garden apartment buildings with enclosed private patios, camera facing southwest.

0009 South façade of high-rise tower with low-rise garden apartments in the foreground, camera facing northwest.

0010 Detail of high-rise tower's south façade with concrete balconies and aluminum-framed window units, camera facing north.

0011 East façade of high-rise tower from midblock on Seventh Street, camera facing west.

0012 Recessed ground-floor storefronts and concrete pier colonnade of high-rise tower, camera facing west.

0013 Typical laundry building, camera facing east.

0014 Four-level parking garage with south façade of high-rise tower in the background, camera facing northwest.

0015 From main pedestrian entrance, east-west pedestrian axis with the straight and curved walkways flanked by low-rise garden apartments, camera facing east to the central plaza's sculpture wall.

0016 North-south pedestrian axis flanked by the high-rise tower and low-rise garden apartments, camera facing south to central plaza.

0017 Central plaza along north-south main axis, camera facing north.

0018 Typical secondary courtyard surrounded by low-rise garden apartments, camera facing south.

0019 Typical surface parking and service court enclosed by low-rise garden apartments, camera facing south.

0020 South façade of high-rise tower juxtaposed with central plaza and low-rise garden units in the foreground, camera facing northeast.

0021 North and west façades of high-rise tower in relation to a typical three-story module in a low-rise garden apartment building, camera facing southeast.

0022 Central plaza, with sculpture wall, grid of London poplar trees, and circular fountain, camera facing northeast.

0023 Central plaza adjacent to low-rise garden apartments with Sacramento high-rise commercial buildings in the background, camera facing northwest.

0024 Communal swimming pool and rear of sculpture wall with central plaza and east-west pedestrian axis in the background, camera facing west.

0025 Typical landscape court with grid of trees between low-rise garden apartments and parking lot, camera facing southwest.

0026 Sunken landscape court at northern end of property, camera facing west.

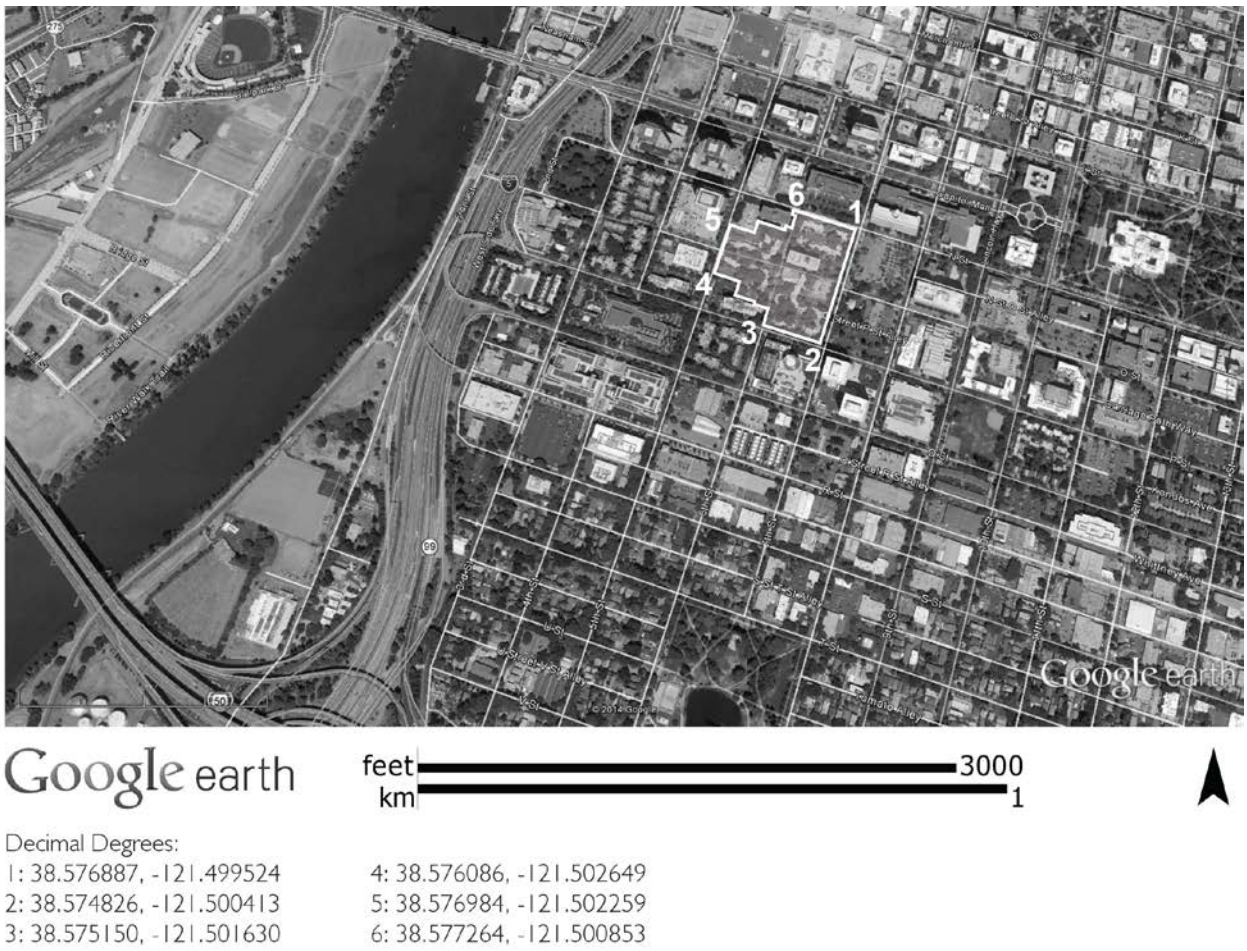
0027 Typical Lawrence Halprin-design wood-slat bench and trash receptacle.

0028 South façade of non-contributing pool house, camera facing north

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.

Additional Documentation: Location Map

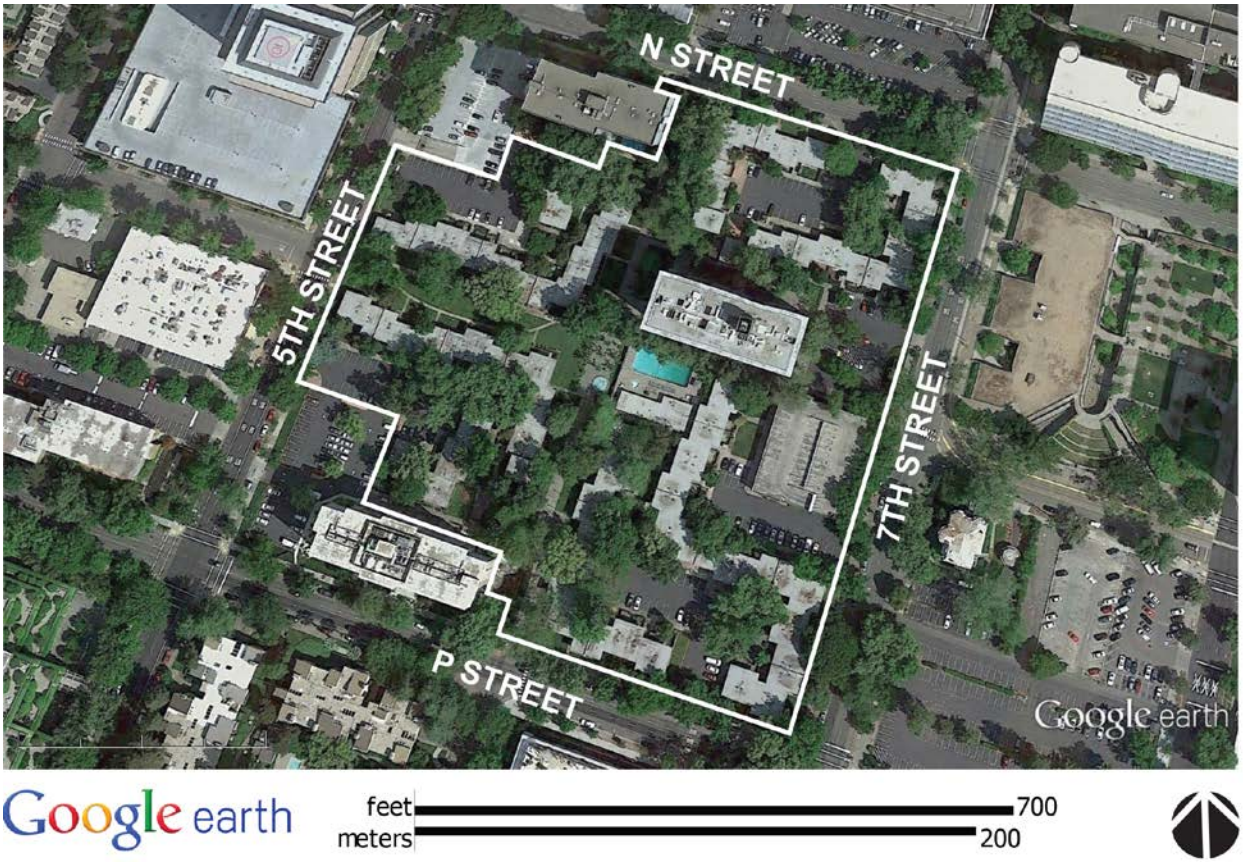
Figure 1.



Source: Google Earth, 2014, modified by Page & Turnbull, 2014.

Additional Documentation: Property Boundary Map

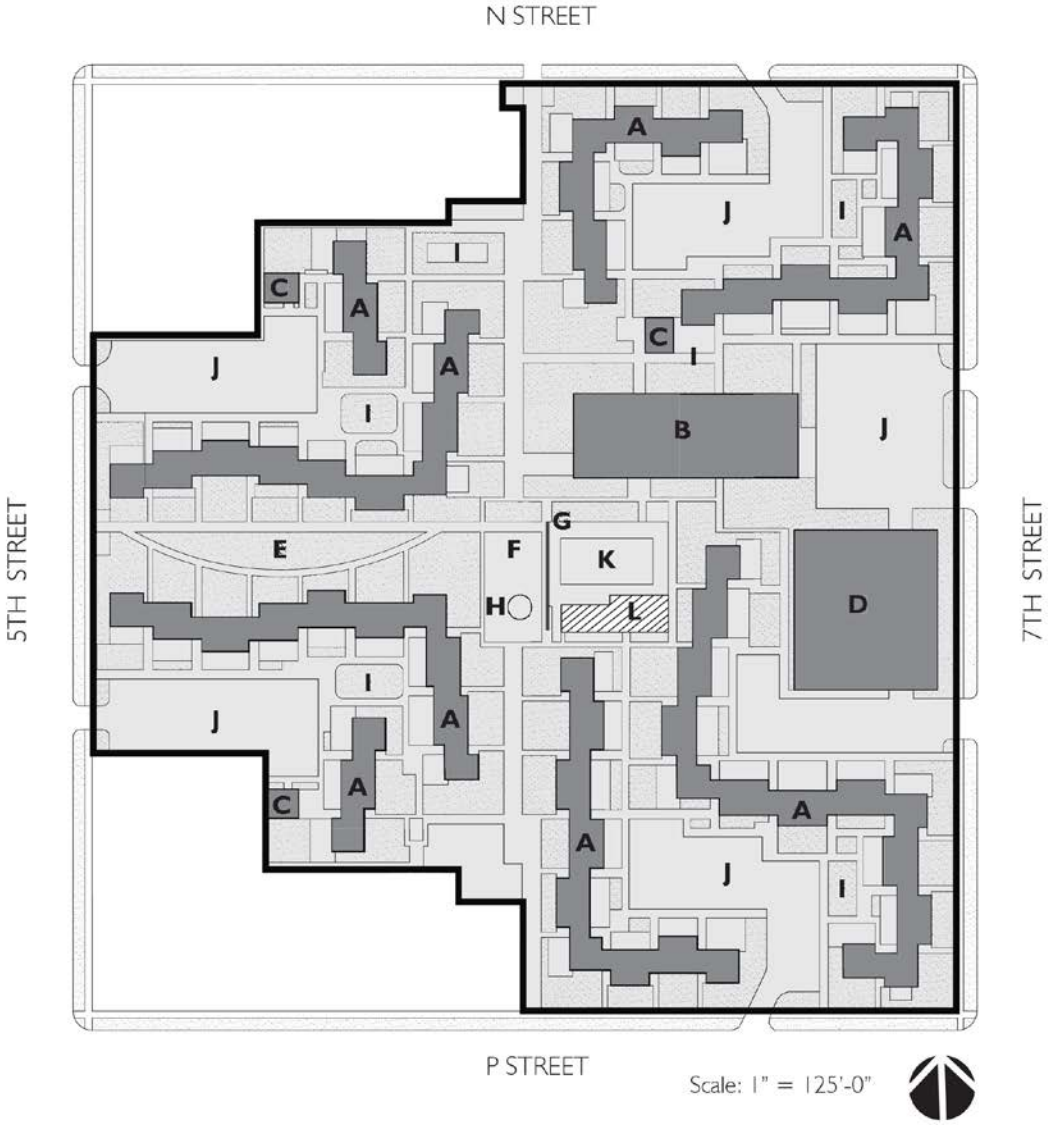
Figure 2.



Source: Google Earth, 2014, modified by Page & Turnbull, 2014.

Additional Documentation: Sketch Map

Figure 3.



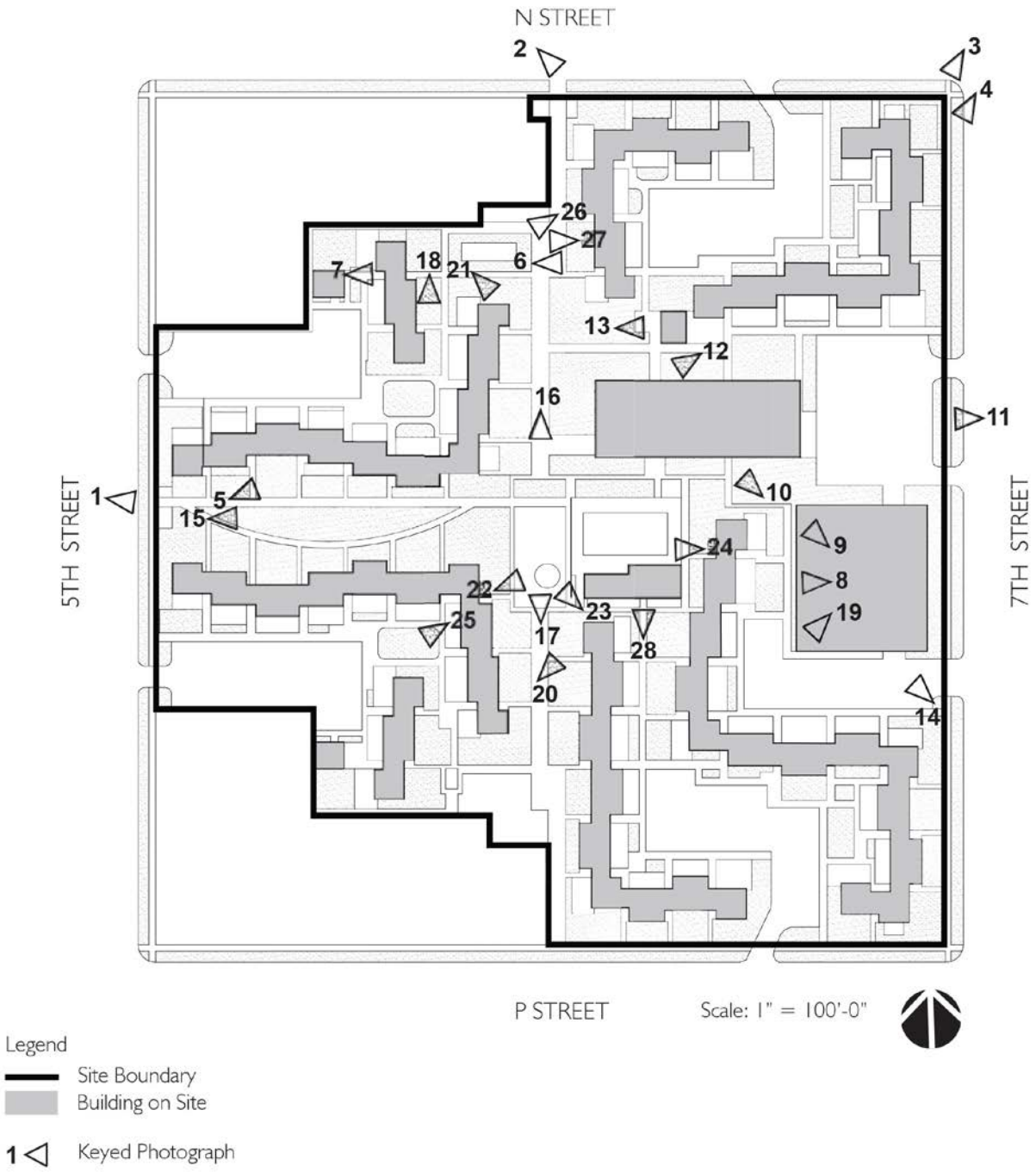
Legend
- Site Boundary
- Contributing Resources
- Contributing Landscape
- Noncontributing Resources

Key:
A: low-rise garden apartments
B: high-rise tower
C: laundry/ lounge buildings
D: parking structure
E: site landscaping
F: central plaza
G: sculptural wall
H: fountain
I: landscaped court
J: parking lot
K: pool
L: pool house

Parcels Within Site Boundary:
006-0300-002
006-0300-003
006-0300-004

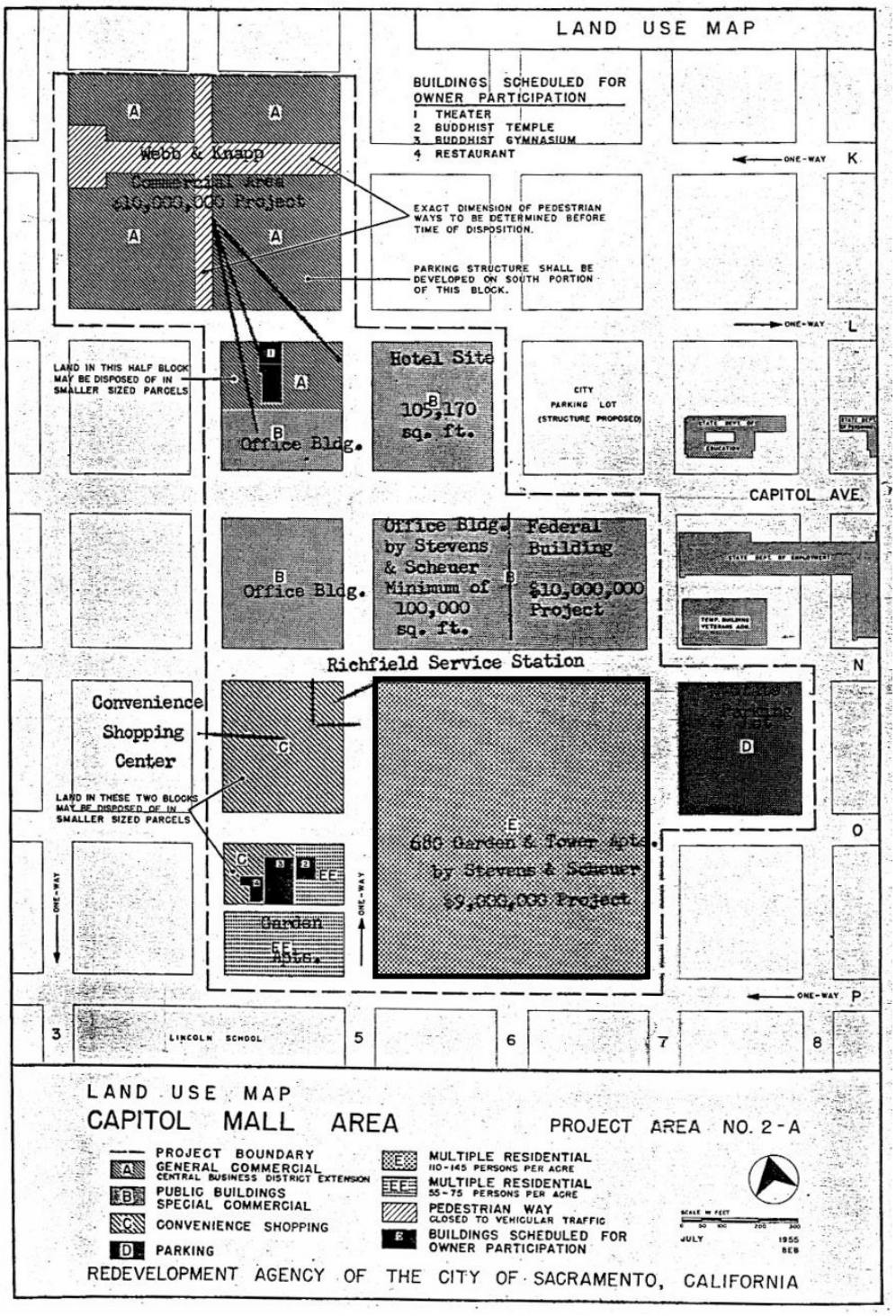
Additional Documentation: Photo Key

Figure 4.



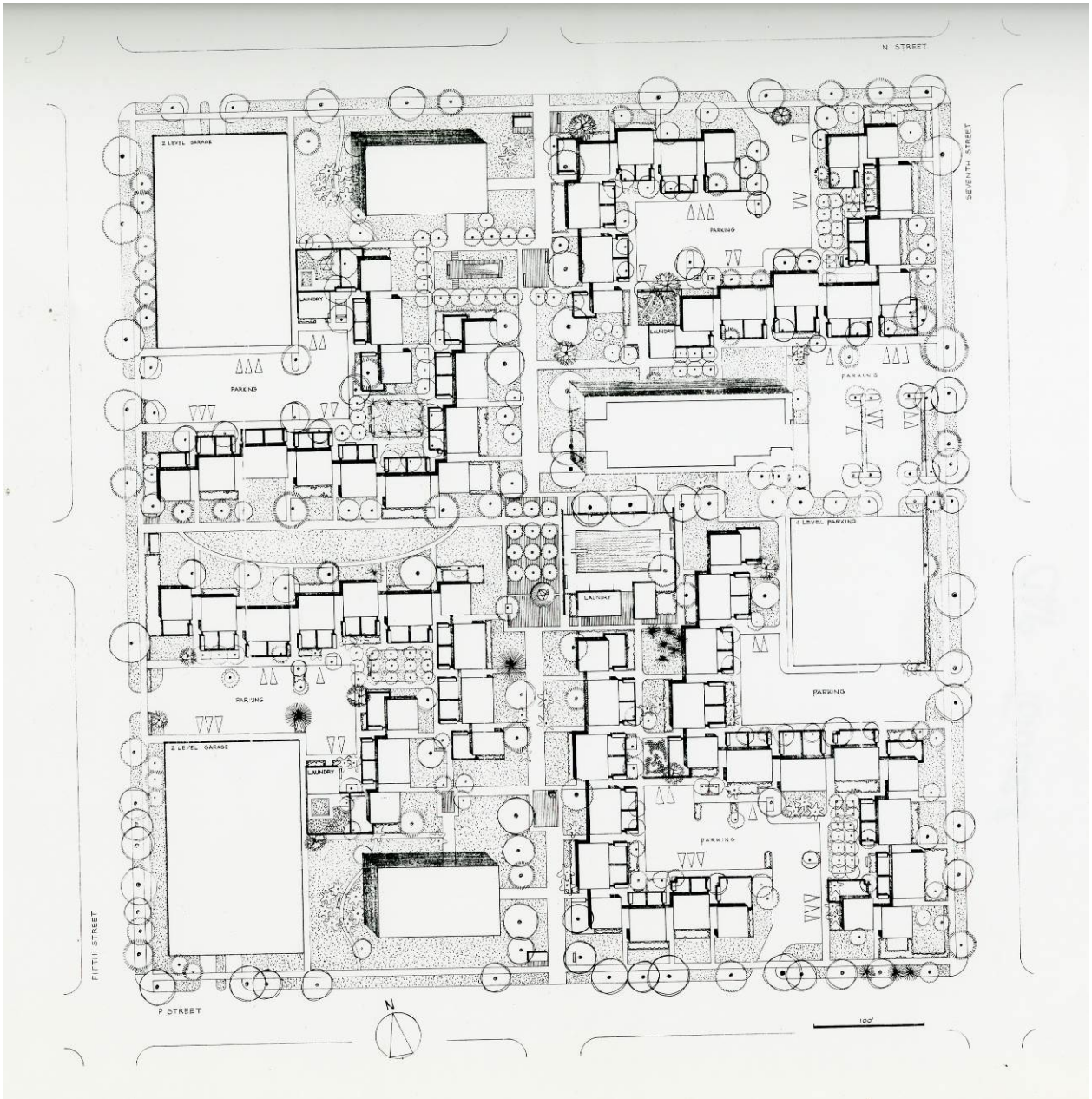
Additional Documentation: Historic Images

Figure 5.



Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project Area, ca. 1959. Capitol Towers is Parcel E in the southeast corner. Source: *Sacramento Redevelopment*, May 1959.

Figure 6.



Site plan for Capitol Towers, ca. 1964. Source: Center for Sacramento History, James Henley Collection, 1997/046/0048.

Figure 7.

Initial low-rise units at Capitol Towers, looking north to the Federal Building under construction, 1960. Source: Center for Sacramento History, Sacramento Bee Collection, 1983/005/SBPM1560.

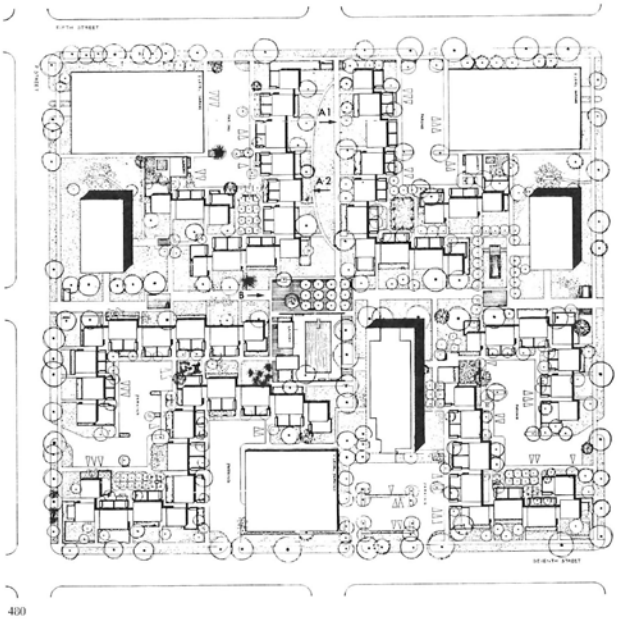
Figure 8.

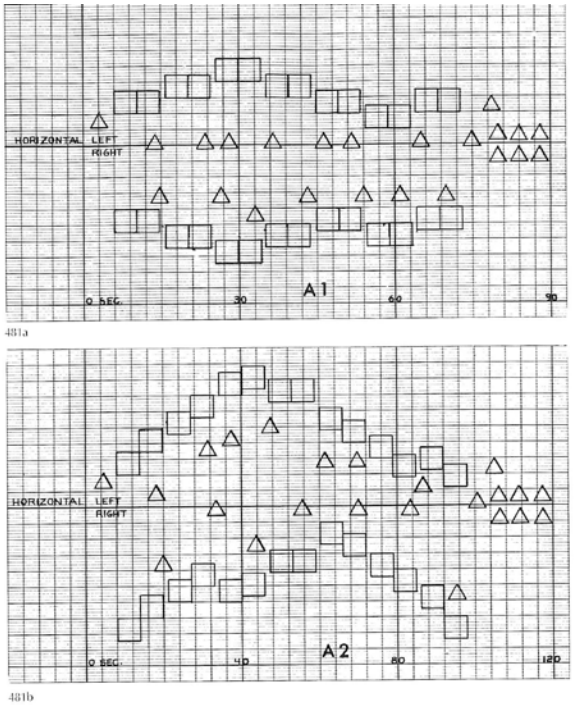
Central plaza at Capitol Towers, with circular fountain and sculptural wall in 1961, looking north. Source: Center for Sacramento History, Sacramento Bee Collection, 1983/005/SBPM0385.

Figure 9.

Capitol Towers' high-rise overlooking low-rise units in 1969, looking north. Source: Center for Sacramento History, Sacramento Bee Collection, 1983/005/SBPM1564.

Figure 10a.





(480,481a, b, c) The plan is of a four-square block area in Sacramento recently rebuilt as the first living space to follow the redevelopment process. The automobile is confined to peripheral areas; the center provides for pedestrian walks, gardens, recreation area, and a plaza at the core. The notation system here is used to evaluate the walking experience in two areas. The "main track" plots the planimetric path of the moving person and relates him to the fixed objects in the space. The sequence is then recorded on horizontal and vertical tracks which mark these relationships, plotting time and distance. On the horizontal track, objects to the right are in front of the path and those to the left are behind. In reading the tracks, bear in mind that the basis of the system is that the environment is moving and the person is fixed. The area marked A, a space between two groups of houses, can be traversed on either the straight path A1, or the curved path A2. The plaza area is designated B. The notation B1 indicates the experience of walking directly through the plaza; B2 indicates a more leisurely experience—walking around the plaza to the sculptured fountain, sitting on a bench, and then on. In both cases, the variegated experience encountered in the nonlinear patterns A2 and B2 are readily observable through the notation system. This is an example of an evaluation of a given design. But the system also functions conversely to develop designs for kinesthetic experience.

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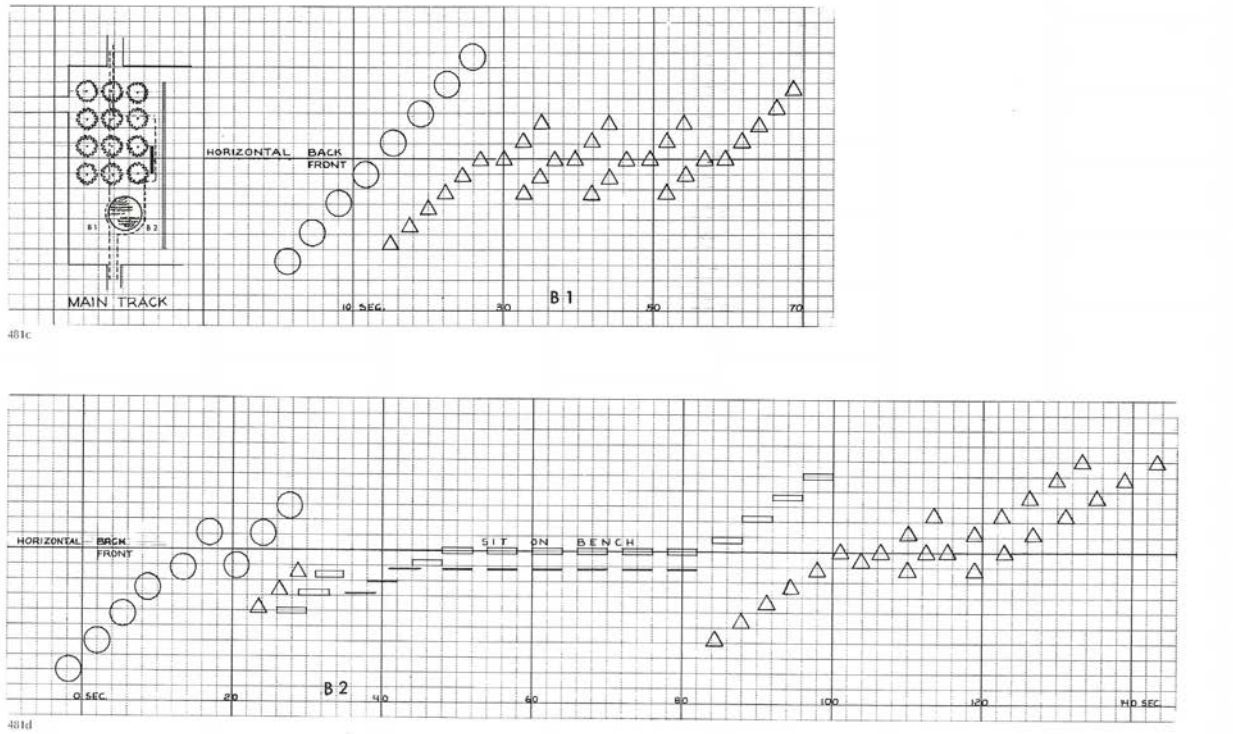
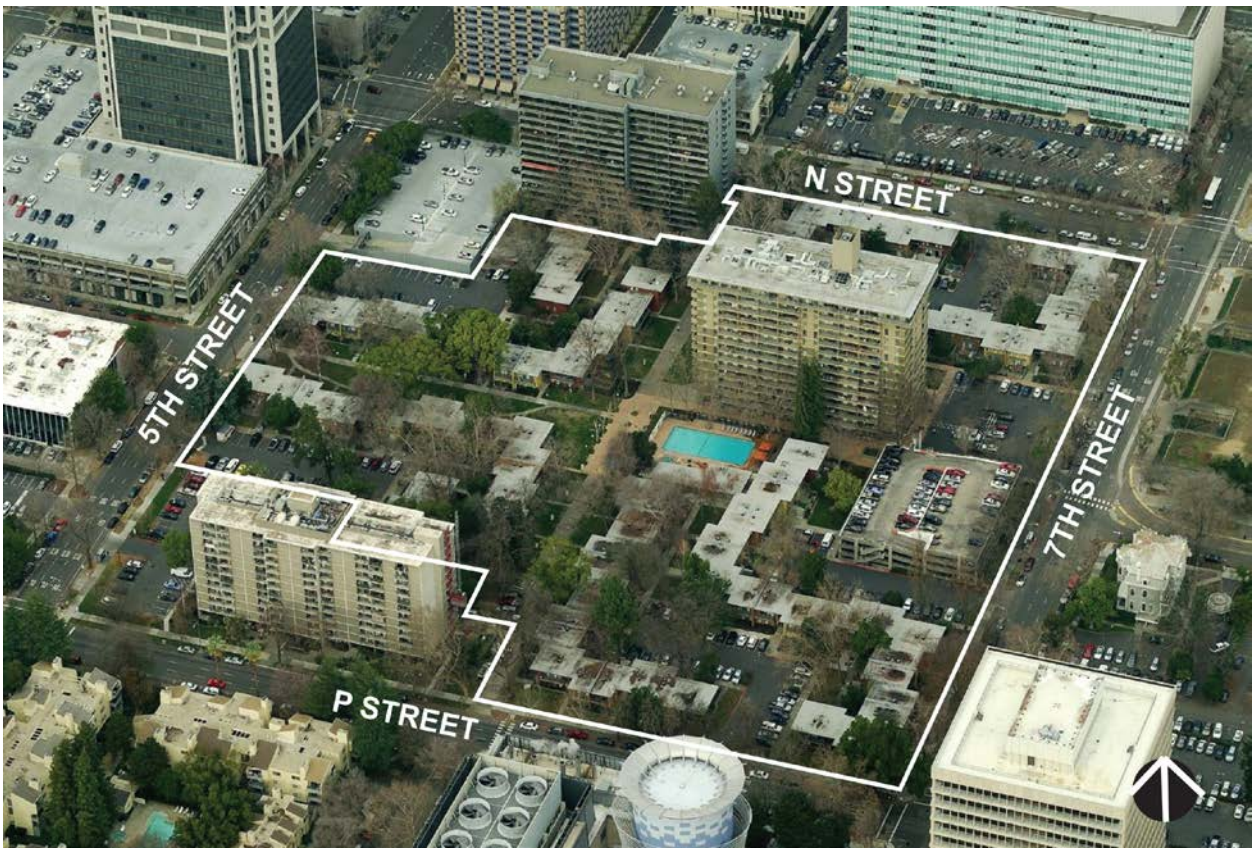
Figure 10b.



Movement notation for Capitol Towers in Lawrence Halprin's *Cities*. Source: Lawrence Halprin, *Cities*, revised edition, 1972, p. 212-213.

Additional Documentation: Property Overview

Figure 11.



Aerial view of Capitol Towers with property and district boundaries. Source: Bing Maps, 2014, modified by Page & Turnbull, 2014.

Photograph 1 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0001

Photograph 2 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0002

Photograph 3 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0003

Photograph 4 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0004

Photograph 5 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0005

Photograph 6 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0006

Photograph 7 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0007

Photograph 8 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0008

Photograph 9 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0009

Photograph 10 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0010

Photograph 11 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0011

Photograph 12 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0012

Photograph 13 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0013

Photograph 14 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0014

Photograph 15 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0015

Photograph 16 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0016

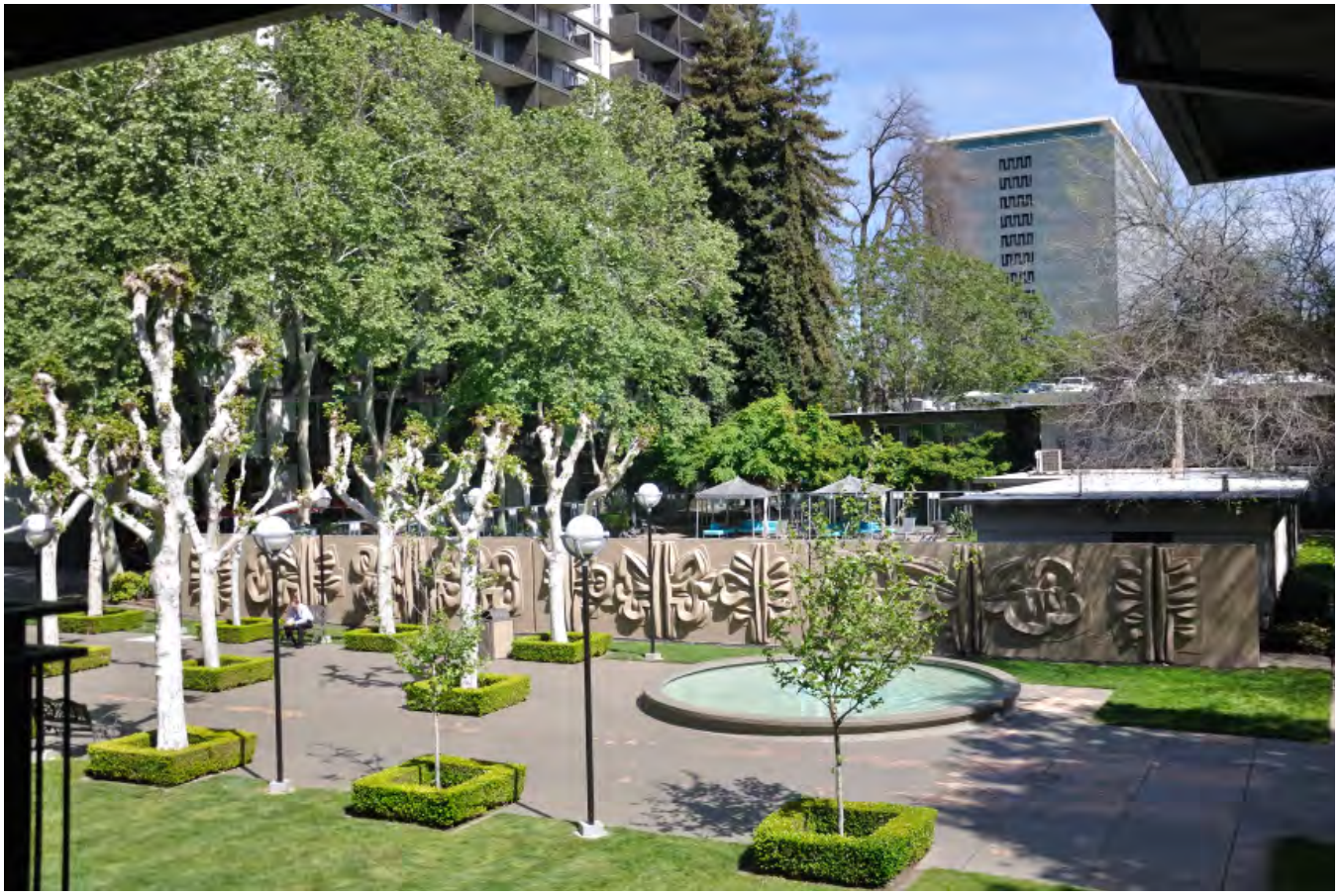
Photograph 17 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0017

Photograph 18 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0018

Photograph 19 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0019

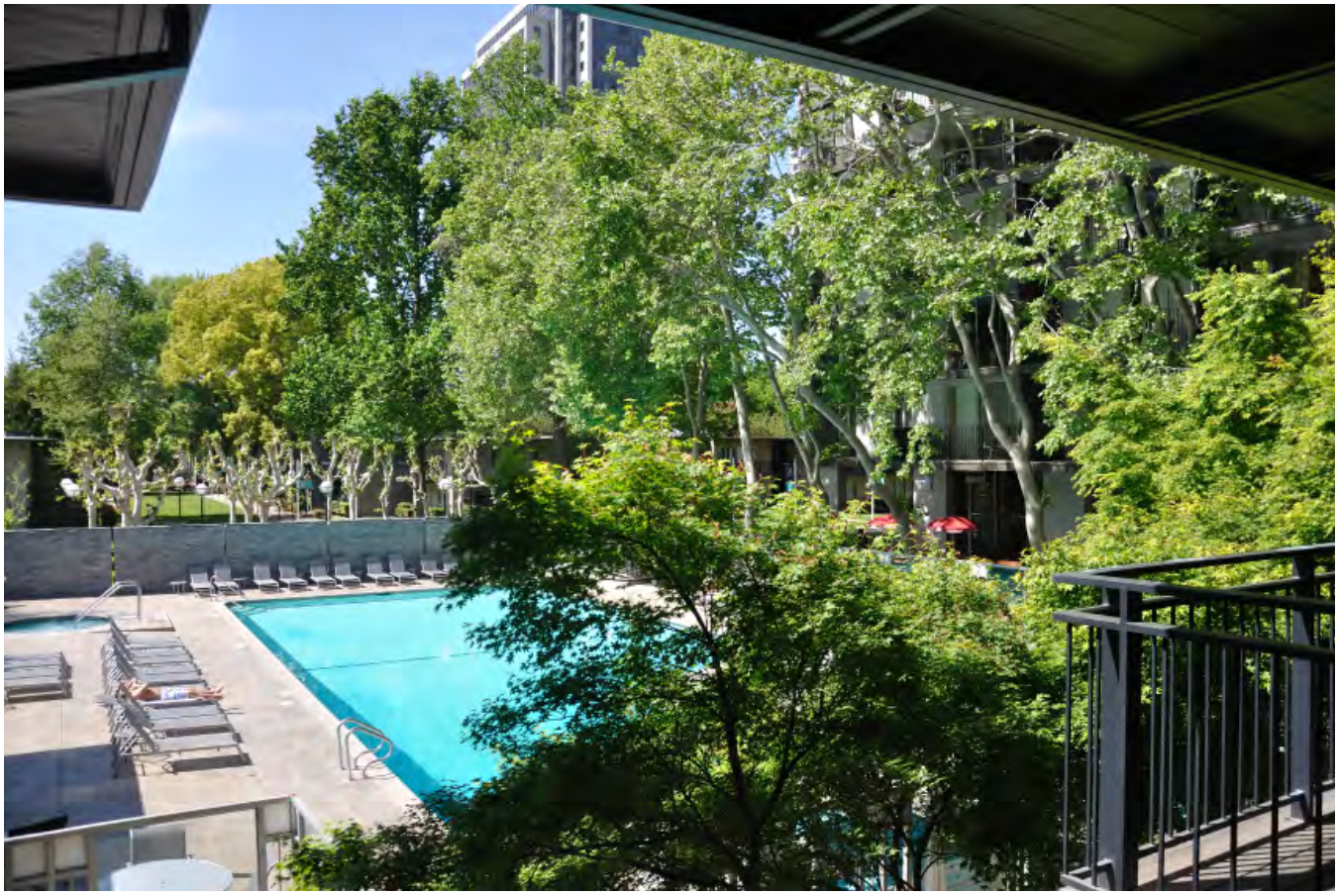
Photograph 20 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0020

Photograph 21 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0021



Photograph 22 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0022

Photograph 23 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0023



Photograph 24 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0024

Photograph 25 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0025

Photograph 26 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0026

Photograph 27 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0027

Photograph 28 of 28: CA_Sacramento County_Capitol Towers_0028

RECOMMENDED Ordinance

ORDINANCE NO. _____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council on _____

ADDING THE NOMINATED CAPITOL TOWERS HISTORIC DISTRICT AND ITS CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES, LOCATED IN THE AREA SOUTH OF N STREET, NORTH OF P STREET, EAST OF 5TH STREET AND WEST OF 7TH STREET, TO THE SACRAMENTO REGISTER OF HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES (M15-001)

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

SECTION 1

A. The Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources (Sacramento Register) is amended by adding the area located in the area depicted in the attached Exhibit A as a Historic District, the properties identified in the list below as Contributing Resources.

B. The area, located in the area south of N Street, north of P Street, east of 5th Street and west of 7th Street, is eligible for listing in the Sacramento Register under the following criteria pursuant to Title 17 of the City Code, the Planning & Development Code, Historic Preservation Chapter, Chapter 17.604, Section 17.604.210(A), Section 17.604.201(B), and Section 17.604.201(C):

i. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, the region, the state or the nation.

Capitol Towers, constructed between 1959 and 1965 on most of a four-block area in Sacramento, California, is significant under Criterion "i" in the area of Community Planning and Development as the residential component and inaugural privately-sponsored development in Sacramento's first realized urban redevelopment area, the Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project. The initial construction of 92 garden apartment units, starting in 1959 and completed in 1960, represented the first private investment in Sacramento to replace the blighted neighborhoods demolished by the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA) under slum clearance. As SRA's Capitol Mall Redevelopment Project was the first to use tax increment financing, the construction of Capitol Towers was at the forefront of redevelopment in California that would reshape many of the state's urban areas in the second half of the twentieth century.

iii. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.

Capitol Towers is also locally significant under Criterion "iii" as a well-planned and well- designed example of urban redevelopment housing. Not only does its pedestrian-oriented design combine low-rise and high-rise buildings, integrated landscape features, and amenities for its residents, the design also maintains a strong urban presence while balancing privacy and community for its residents. Capitol Towers exhibited thoughtful and people-oriented design and planning features from conception through completion, even as the designers refined the design while adhering to the requirements that came with federal funding.

iv. It represents the work of an important creative individual or master.

Capitol Towers is significant under Criterion "iv" as the first redevelopment project constructed by many of its talented design team that included Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons, Edward Larrabee Barnes, DeMars & Reay and Lawrence Halprin, as well as local Sacramento firm Dreyfuss & Blackford. The executed design reflects their social and aesthetic philosophies during a formative period of their careers. In particular, Capitol Towers embodies the design and planning approach of WBE applied to a large urban property, and is considered by Lawrence Halprin to be his first urban plaza.

v. It possesses high artistic values

The site is significant under Criterion "v" as the Jacques Overhoff designed sculptural wall is of high artistic value in the district.

Also, the *resource* has integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and association.

Capitol Towers retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance, despite alterations to component elements, with extant urban design concepts, spatial organization, circulation patterns, primary residential buildings, and key landscape features.

C. The area, located in the area south of N Street, north of P Street, east of 5th Street and west of 7th Street, is eligible as a Historic District under the following criteria:

a. *The area is a geographically definable area;*

b. *The area possesses:*

i. *A significant concentration or continuity of buildings unified by past events;*

ii. *The area is associated with a period significant or important to city history;*

c. *The designation of the geographic area as a historic district is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to protect, promote and further the goals and purposes of this chapter and is not inconsistent with other goals and policies of the city.*

The following factors are also satisfied:

a. *The nominated historic district has integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship and association;*

b. *The collective historic value of the buildings and structures in the nominated historic district taken together may be greater than the historic value of each individual building or structure.*

D. The properties identified below are eligible as Contributing Resources under the following criteria:

1. *The nominated resource is within a historic district;*
2. *The nominated resource either embodies the significant features and characteristics of the historic district or adds to the historical associations and historical architectural qualities identified for the historic district;*
3. *The nominated resource was present during the period of historical significance of the historic district and relates to the documented historical significance of the historic district;*
4. *The nominated resource possesses historic integrity or is capable of yielding important information about the period of historical significance of the historic district; and*
5. *The nominated resource has important historic or architectural worth, and its designation as a contributing resource is reasonable, appropriate and necessary to protect, promote and further the goals and purposes of the Historic Preservation chapter of the City Code.*

E. The following properties and site elements are identified as Contributing Resources in the district:

1. Site Elements

a. The designed landscape (hardscape and softscape) with features and elements, including the central plaza, secondary courtyards, landscaped courts, and small-scale features;

b. The swimming pool near the center of the property; and

c. Two (2) contributing objects:

- The sculptural wall by Jacques Overhoff.
- The circular fountain in the central plaza.

2. Buildings including 13 proposed contributing buildings constructed in three phases between 1959 and 1965:

- One (1) high-rise residential tower.
- Eight (8) low-rise garden apartment buildings.
- Three (3) laundry/lounge buildings.
- Parking garage structure.

SECTION 2

A. Sacramento City Code Section 17.604.220 prescribes that the Significant Feature(s) and Characteristic(s) of the resources to be added to the Sacramento Register shall be identified in the designating Ordinance.

1. Capitol Towers Historic District and Contributing Resources' Significant Features & Characteristics:

The significant features and characteristics of the Capitol Towers Historic District and its Contributing Resources include the following:

SITE

The site and landscape design is an integral part of Capitol Towers. This includes the spatial organization and circulation within the property, placement and relationships of the buildings to each other and to the landscape, specific landscape features, views and vistas, and small-scale features:

- **Spatial Organization** – *rectilinear pedestrian axes that divide the complex into four smaller garden-oriented quadrants; historic axial streets of O Street and 6th Street were repurposed as pedestrian access routes that were integrated into the superblock organization; low-rise garden apartments with shared lawns line the main pedestrian axes similar to a city street; the intersection of the pedestrian axes forms Capitol Towers' central plaza where its distinct sculpture wall is a focal point and helps with orientation; other community amenities are near the center, including a*

communal swimming pool and the high-rise tower with its ground0floor restaurants, shops, and offices. The east-west axis zigzags around the central plaza to continue as a walkway between the swimming pool and the tower. The spatial relationships between the low-rise and the high-rise building create a comfortable density that avoids enormous stretches of vast emptiness seen in some "towers in the park" developments; the park-like setting is created through a variety of proportionally-scaled spaces for private uses, shared lawns, quiet courtyards, communal gathering, and recreational use; for the residents, privacy and community are balance the project served as an early and highly regarded demonstration of both interactive public space connected with the city circulation, and a respite for the core residential community. As much as Capitol Towers is a self-contained, pedestrian-oriented property, it remains open, permeable, and complementary to the larger urban context; at the northeast and southeast corners, the low-rises present a street-facing presence to engage the property with the surrounding streets, which is unlike earlier larger-scaled garden apartment complexes that emphasized an internal orientation as an escape from the city; similarly, the main north-south and east-west pedestrian axes at Capitol Towers generally continue the urban sidewalk grid, rather than create a new circulation pattern; the low-rise buildings and its balconies internally face the main pedestrian walks as on a city street, and the open and welcoming pedestrian entrances at the west, north, and south allow residents and non-residents alike to walk through the development and reconnect with the street grid; the parking areas…are placed at the edges so that Capitol Towers can have open, car-free internal spaces, the surface parking areas are tucked into interior courts and accessed from the streets by narrow driveway curb cuts.

- **Building Placement and Relationships** – *two low-rise garden apartment buildings are in each quadrant of the superblock; the long, narrow buildings are roughly L-shaped, linear, or zigzag in plan and are sited relative to each other to line the main axes as well as create secondary landscaped courtyards; at the property periphery, the buildings surround surface parking and service courts while also fronting city streets at the southeast (P and 7th Streets) and northeast (N and 7th Streets) edges with small lawns; the arrangement of buildings allows for shared open green spaces, private outdoor spaces, convenient access to automobile parking, and an urban presence for the property; the high-rise apartment tower, located in the northeast quadrant toward the center of the*

superblock, is visible from within and from outside the property; while the tower is adjacent to both surface parking and the four-level parking garage at the eastern edge of the property at 7th Street, it is also surrounded by pedestrian walkway and landscaped areas that connect it to the low-rise apartment buildings, central plaza, and pool area without overwhelming the lower-scale features; three one-story ancillary buildings used for laundry facilities and as a lounge with adjacent former playground spaces are at the northwest and southwest corners of the property, as well as north of the high-rise.

- **Circulation** – *In addition to the main pedestrian axes, smaller walkways branch off from the main axes through the lawns and courtyards of the interior green spaces, leading to the residential units; these branches extend into the low-rise apartment buildings through the breezeways that separate the unit modules; pedestrian access extends further beyond the residential units to the parking facilities, which allows for easy access between one's automobile and residence without impeding pedestrian flow of the central areas; other paths extend to the ancillary buildings and the high-rise tower; most pedestrian paths are paved with concrete and are straight and rectilinear in orientation, except for one curving pathway along the southern part of the west main pedestrian axis; this pathway interrupts the grid-like pedestrian routes that extend to the residential units but provides an alternate walking experience through the superblock; with automobile circulation limited to the property's periphery, six automobile access drives lead to interior surface parking and service courts and the four-level parking garage.*

- **Landscape Features** – *The landscape design at Capitol Towers is defined by public common spaces, semi-public shared lawns, secondary courtyards between buildings, landscaped courts, and private outdoor spaces like patios and balconies; each of the 409 residential units (206 in low-rise buildings and 203 in the high-rise tower) has a private rear patio or balcony; some existing site and street trees were retained and incorporated at the time of construction, while new trees were planted then and have matured, creating [some areas of] full canopies on the property; the ground cover is primarily grass on lawns that connect across the low-rise buildings, in addition to low planting around the low-rise modules; the central plaza is a paved area formed by a widened section of the north-south walkway axis; the plaza contains a grid of London plane trees set into concrete pavers, along with a low circular*

fountain with central jets at the southeast corner; anchoring the plaza is a long sculptural wall designed by Jacques Overhoff at the eastern edge; the back or east side of the sculpture wall faces the swimming pool; the pool is rectilinear and is oriented length-wise along the east-west axis; the pool is set within a large patio area; in addition to the shared lawns, several public landscaped courts are found throughout Capitol Towers; these landscaped courts typically have grids of trees providing shade, and grass, low plantings, gravel, or other ground cover, and wood-slat benches; they offer a transition and entry point at each surfacing parking lot and near the north and south pedestrian entrances as a buffer to the two towers that are not part of the property; the landscaped court at the north end of the superblock, located west of the north-south main walkway, is a sunken court.

- **Views & Vistas** – *The views and vistas at Capitol Towers Apartments are set within the landscape orientation; the main axes and rectilinear pathways frame the property and establish a series of forced axial perspectives that are softened by the staggered, informal garden apartment buildings and irregular and more picturesque plantings; the breezeways between the unit modules and the landscape courts also serve to frame views as a transitional experience between the superblock interior and the peripheral parking facilities; views from the first-floor units of the low-rise apartment buildings are restricted by walls that enclose private patios; the upper story units have balconies at the opposite side of the building overlooking interior green spaces rather than infringing upon the privacy of the first-floor patios; views and vistas from the high-rise apartment tower vary, depending on height and orientation.*

- **Small-Scale Features** – *Capitol Towers contains a number of small-scale features set within the landscape; they include metal and wood-slat benches, banner flag posts, globe light posts, a circular fountain, …[and] wood-slat… trash receptacles.*

- **Object** – *Artist Jacques Overhoff designed the approximately 100-foot, free-standing sculpture wall in the central plaza for Capitol Towers; the wall is several panels of cast concrete with a bas relief of abstract shapes.*

<u>BUILDINGS</u>

Within Capitol Towers are two main residential building types: two- and three-story garden apartment buildings and a high-rise apartment

tower; ancillary buildings include three one-story laundry/lounge facilities and a four-story parking garage:

- **Low-Rise Garden Apartment Buildings** – *Each of the low-rise garden apartment buildings consists of staggered unit modules connected by open breezeways and a continuous flat, built-up roof with a unifying four-foot deep eave of exposed wood rafters and boards; the wood-frame unit modules are clad in [smooth] stucco…; each two-story module contains two or four units (one or two per floor); the three-story modules, located at the end of some buildings, contain a first-floor flat and a two-story unit on the upper floors; there are six unit types, ranging from studio to three-bedroom layouts; the unit entry doors are in the breezeways, as are wood stairs with [open risers, and] metal railings that lead to the second-floor units; the primary fenestration is a tall, tripartite aluminum-framed window unit with casement windows (one operable, one fix) above a single, fixed pane of glazing; the windows are in regular patterns, but the pattern varies based on the unit types; each unit has an outdoor space accessed through an aluminum-framed sliding glass door with one or two fixed, full-height glazing; the first-floor units have private patios enclosed by wood-board fencing topped by open-framed rails that are generally oriented toward the surface parking and service courts; the second-floor units have wood balconies with metal railing and are oriented to the opposite façade from the patios to provide privacy; the balconies generally face landscape laws and walkways toward the superblock interior or city streets; privacy and shading are further enhanced for the patios by wood-slat overhangs between the first and second floors above the sliding glass door. As a matter of its Modern design as well as a budget limited by FHA requirements, the buildings are simply and subtly detailed; the low-rise buildings are staggered to prevent straight, monotonous blocks of units; breezeways between modules create permeable spaces for natural breezes, views, and pedestrian circulation; simple design details, such as the uniformly deep eaves and the wood-slat sunshades over the patio doors, not only create architectural accents and visual consistency but they also provide functional sun protection and dynamic shading throughout the property; such details, along with the unusual casement windows with lower panes that form almost full-height glazing and private outdoor areas for each unit, add to the visual interest and livability of the units.*

- **High-Rise Tower** – *The high-rise apartment tower is a 15-story, rectangular building that is oriented lengthwise along the*

superblock's east-west pedestrian axis; it is a reinforced concrete building; the roof is flat with air conditioning and other equipment as well as a screened cooling tower on top; the high-rise has a partially recessed base, a middle shaft of apartment units with balconies, and a projecting penthouse level; its exterior is primarily aluminum-framed glazing and board-formed concrete with a vertical board pattern; the upper stories are defined by a series of horizontal bands that separate each floor; the north and south facades feature bays of projecting concrete balconies; each façade is different and asymmetrical with its vertical orientation reinforced by the stacking of balconies and windows; the south façade has two main groups of balconies, one with three balconies and one with four; full-height partition walls divide the balconies, which have low concrete end walls and metal railings; each balcony contains a glazed wall with a full-height sliding glass door and two full-height fixed glazed panels; between the balcony groupings and at the east and west ends of the south façade are two bays of aluminum-framed windows separated by board-formed concrete walls; these full-height, four-lite window units have a fixed top and bottom lite and a pair of operable casement windows in the center; the north façade is similar to the south façade, but has three bays of balconies; the central bay has three balconies, while the east bay has two and the west bay has a single balcony; pairs of the four-lite casement window units are located between the balcony bans and at the east and west ends of the north façade; the west façade has two bays of balconies, one at each end; between the bays is board-formed concrete with a vertical board pattern and an open, recessed stair landing with fire doors and metal railing; each balcony has concrete end walls and metal railing, as well as a sliding glass door and a pair of aluminum-framed casement windows with a fixed top lite; the east façade has two bays of shallow balconettes with full-height sliding glass doors board-formed concrete is located between the balconette bays; a bay of recessed stair landings is also between the balconette bays; at the top of the building is a projecting, continuous balcony with metal posts and railing around all facades; the penthouse units are recessed with full-height windows and sliding doors to the balcony; the high-rise tower contains studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartment units along a double-loaded corridor, while three-bedroom units are at the penthouse level; the partially recessed ground floor has a shaded colonnade of board-formed concrete piers on the north and south sides, while the west end is an open breezeway; the east end [originally set back from the concrete piers]; the ground floor contains full-height aluminum-

framed storefront windows for the building lobby and the neighborhood-serving retail, offices, and restaurants. The high-rise tower, one of the earliest by WBE, is similarly modest in detail but avoids flatness and monotony; though the windows, sliding glass doors, and concrete balconies are consistent on the two long sides (north and south facades), they have different bay patterns for visual interest; the projecting penthouse balcony gives the building a top, almost in the traditional base-shaft-top organization seen in Classical and New Formalist buildings; the base of the high-rise is partially open and recessed to create a sense of lightness and reception; the resulting colonnade offers a shaded walkway to access the neighborhood-serving retail and restaurants.

- **Laundry/Lounge Buildings** –*There are three, one-story, concrete block buildings on the property constructed with the low-rises between 1959 and 1961; they are rectangular in plan with flat roofs and four-foot deep eaves.*

- **Parking Garage** – *The parking garage is a four-level split-level building; constructed with the high-rise tower between 1963 and 1965, it is located along the eastern edge of the property, alongside 7th Street and southeast of the high-rise apartment tower; the garage is reinforced concrete and features exit-entrance ramps on the ground floors of the north and south sides; all stories feature exterior half-walls with pipe guard railings; two exterior stairwells protrude from the north and south sides; an elevator shaft also protrudes from the north side of the garage, adjacent to the stairwell.*

SECTION 3

1. Adoption of this ordinance promotes the maintenance and enhancement of the significant features and characteristics of the Capitol Towers Historic District and Contributing Resources pursuant to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

2. Adoption of this ordinance promotes the maintenance and enhancement of the historic materials and fabric, as well as the appearance, of the Capitol Towers Historic District and its Contributing Resources.

3. Adoption of this ordinance is consistent with the City's Historic & Cultural Resources Element of the 2035 General Plan.

4. Adoption of this ordinance designating and adding these properties to the Sacramento Register as a historic district and its contributing resources will afford the properties the ability to use the California Historical Building Code and provide eligibility for any other preservation incentives that may be adopted for listed properties.

5. Addition of these properties to the Sacramento Register as a historic district with its contributing resources helps to protect the historic resources of the City of Sacramento.

SECTION 4

The City Manager of the City of Sacramento is hereby directed to add to the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources:

A. the area depicted in the attached Exhibit A as the Capitol Towers Historic District;

B. the above listing of its Contributing Resources; and,

C. the significant features and characteristics identified above.

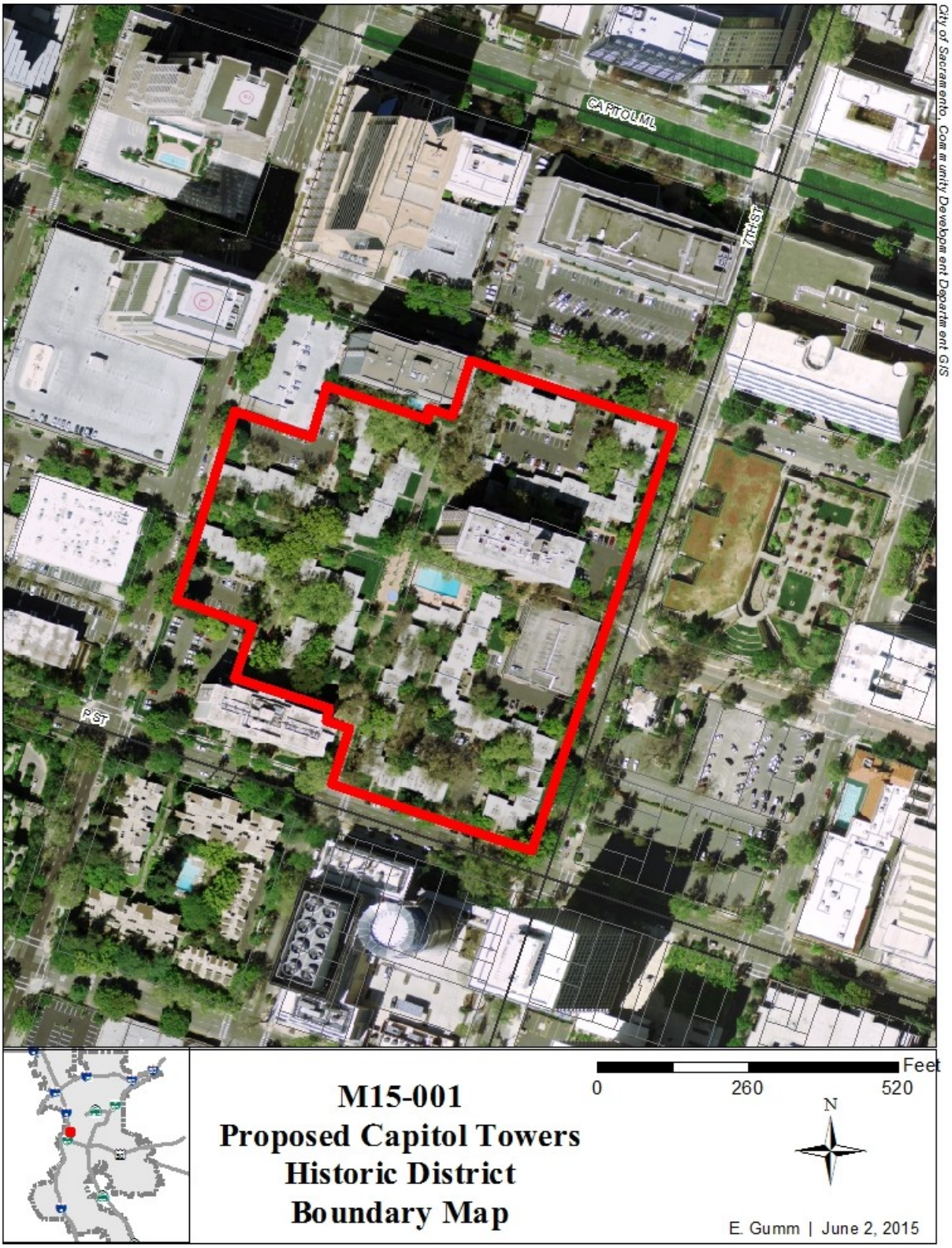



Exhibit A: Capitol Towers Historic District Boundaries