



Report to  
**PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
City of Sacramento  
915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671  
www.CityofSacramento.org

3

**STAFF REPORT**  
**August 3, 2011**

Members of the Preservation Commission:

**Subject: Raised Streets / Hollow Sidewalks Historic Context & Survey Report (M11-016)**

Sacramento Old City Association presentation to the Commission on the subject Report.

**Location/Council District:**

From Front Street to 12<sup>th</sup> Street and from H Street to L Street

Council District #1

**Recommendation:** Staff requests the Preservation Commission (Commission) review and provide direction on the Report.

**Contact:** Roberta Deering, Senior Planner for Historic Preservation (916) 808-8259

**Presenters:** Linda Whitney, President, Sacramento Old City Association (SOCA)  
Heather Lavezzo Downey, Consultant to SOCA

**Property Owner:** Multiple Property Owners & City of Sacramento Public Rights-of-Way

**Summary:** The Sacramento Old City Association (SOCA) completed an augmented historic context statement and revised survey forms on the Raised Streets / Hollow Sidewalks Historic Context and Survey Report, featuring in particular the context and additional information on the raised streets as a linear feature, and related revisions of the survey forms references from "structures," to "district features," and updating the District Record form. The Report is a historic context statement and historic district survey of the City's 1860s and 1870s raised streets and hollow sidewalks in the downtown area.

**Background Information:** In 2008, the City's Preservation Commission requested that Staff apply for a Certified Local Government (CLG) Historic Preservation Fund Grant through the State of California's Office of Historic Preservation to survey the downtown's raised streets and hollow sidewalks to determine their potential for eligibility

and historic integrity as a historic resource. The Capitol City Preservation Trust (CCPT,) a not-for-profit organization offered to provide the match for the grant. The CLG Grant of \$12,000 was awarded, with the CCPT matching the required \$6,000. After a selection process, the historic preservation consulting firm of Page & Turnbull was hired to begin the process. A historic context statement and a many months survey of hollow sidewalks was conducted and submitted. The State Office of Historic Preservation was understanding that, with the limited funding, all the elements of the potential resource could not be adequately covered, and encouraged the City to consider completing the work. The Sacramento Old City Association then stepped up to the plate and, working with both City and State Preservation Office Staff, hired Heather Lavezzo Downey to complete the report. Her focus was to augment the historic context and survey forms especially relative to the raised streets elements of the survey. In particular the raised streets were identified as a linear feature, the survey forms were revised to note the hollow sidewalk elements and other features as district features instead of structures, and a district record form was created.

**Environmental Considerations:** In several environmental documents involving discretionary development projects in the downtown, the City has made preliminary determinations that certain of these hollow sidewalk/raised streets features should be considered historical resources pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. The SOCA Report recommends that the Raised Streets / Hollow Sidewalks District is eligible for listing in the National, California and Sacramento Registers of Historical Resources, and identifies significant character-defining features of the district.

**Policy Considerations:** The City's Historic & Cultural Resources Element of its 2030 General Plan policies calls for the identification of, "...historic and cultural resources including properties, districts, and sites (e.g. archaeological sites) to provide adequate protection of these resources." (HCR 2.1.1) And, the element includes another policy that, "The City shall ensure that City, State, and Federal historic preservation laws, regulations, and codes are implemented, including the California Historical Building Code and State laws related to archaeological resources, to ensure the adequate protection of these resources." (HCR 2.1.2) Another policy calls for the City to, "...maintain all City-owned historic and cultural resources in a manner that is consistent with the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties." (HCR 2.1.9) The Commission could recommend the initiation of a nomination of the district to the Sacramento or California Registers of Historical Resources, however with respect to nomination to the Sacramento Register, there are technical limitations that need to be considered. For historic properties listed in the Sacramento Register, the City's Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code, Chapter 17.134, limits preservation reviews of development projects to publically accessible interiors, as follows,

Feature or characteristic" may include historically and/or architecturally significant *interior areas that are accessible to or made available to the public*, including, without limitation, areas commonly used as public spaces such as lobbies, meeting rooms, gathering rooms, public hallways, great halls, bank lobbies, or other similar spaces. Interior areas that generally are not accessible to or made available to the public, but

Subject: Raised Streets/Hollow Sidewalks Report(M11-016) Meeting Date: August 3, 2011

which occasionally may be visited by business invitees or members of the public, including those on a tour of a facility, do not constitute a “feature or characteristic” for purposes of this chapter.” (17.134.020 Definitions.)

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA,) however, public projects can be considered discretionary projects for purposes of environmental review and to a certain extent, projects involving these resources, within the public right-of-way, can be considered discretionary.

**Recommendation for Commission Direction**

With the City’s General Plan policies, cited above, calling for identification of historic resources in order to afford protections for those resources, Staff recommends that the Commission request Staff and Counsel to review and report back on the protection measures that would or would not be afforded if the district were nominated/listed in the National, California and/or the Sacramento Registers.

Respectfully submitted by:   
ROBERTA DEERING  
Senior Planner for Historic Preservation

Recommendation Approved:   
WILLIAM CROUCH  
Preservation Director/Urban Design Manager

Table of Contents:

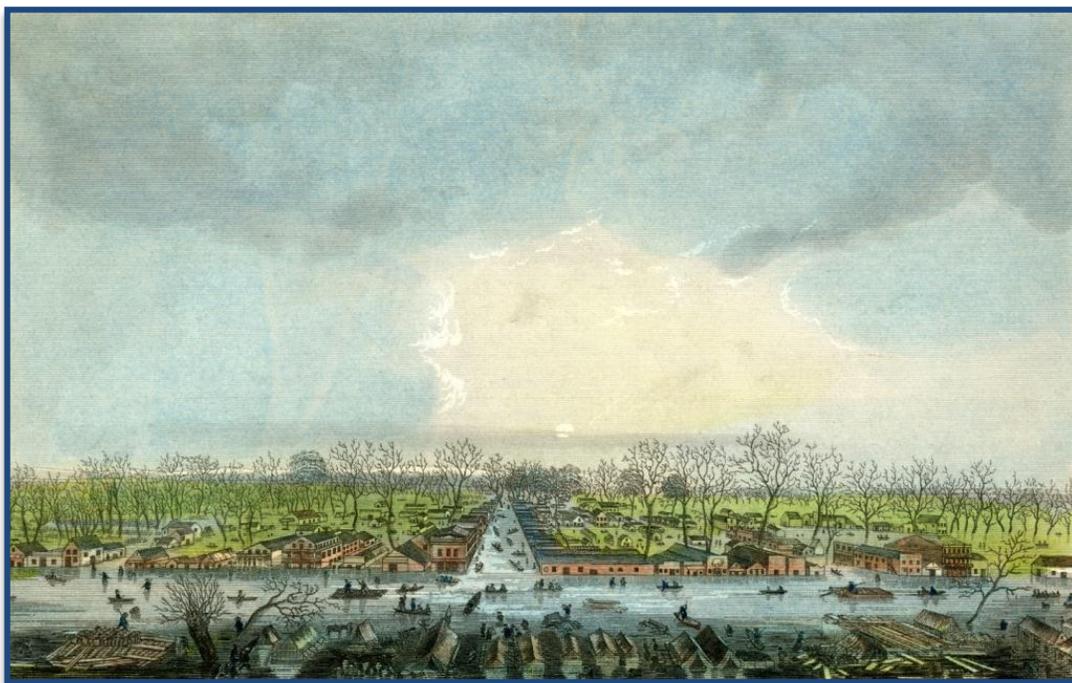
Attachment : Sacramento Old City Association’s Raised Streets/Hollow Sidewalks Historic Context and Survey Report

**Attachment**

# Historic Context

for

## Sacramento's Raised Streets & Hollow Sidewalks District



Prepared by Heather Lavezzo Downey, M.A.

Prepared for Sacramento Old City Association (SOCA)

December 2010

## Table of Contents

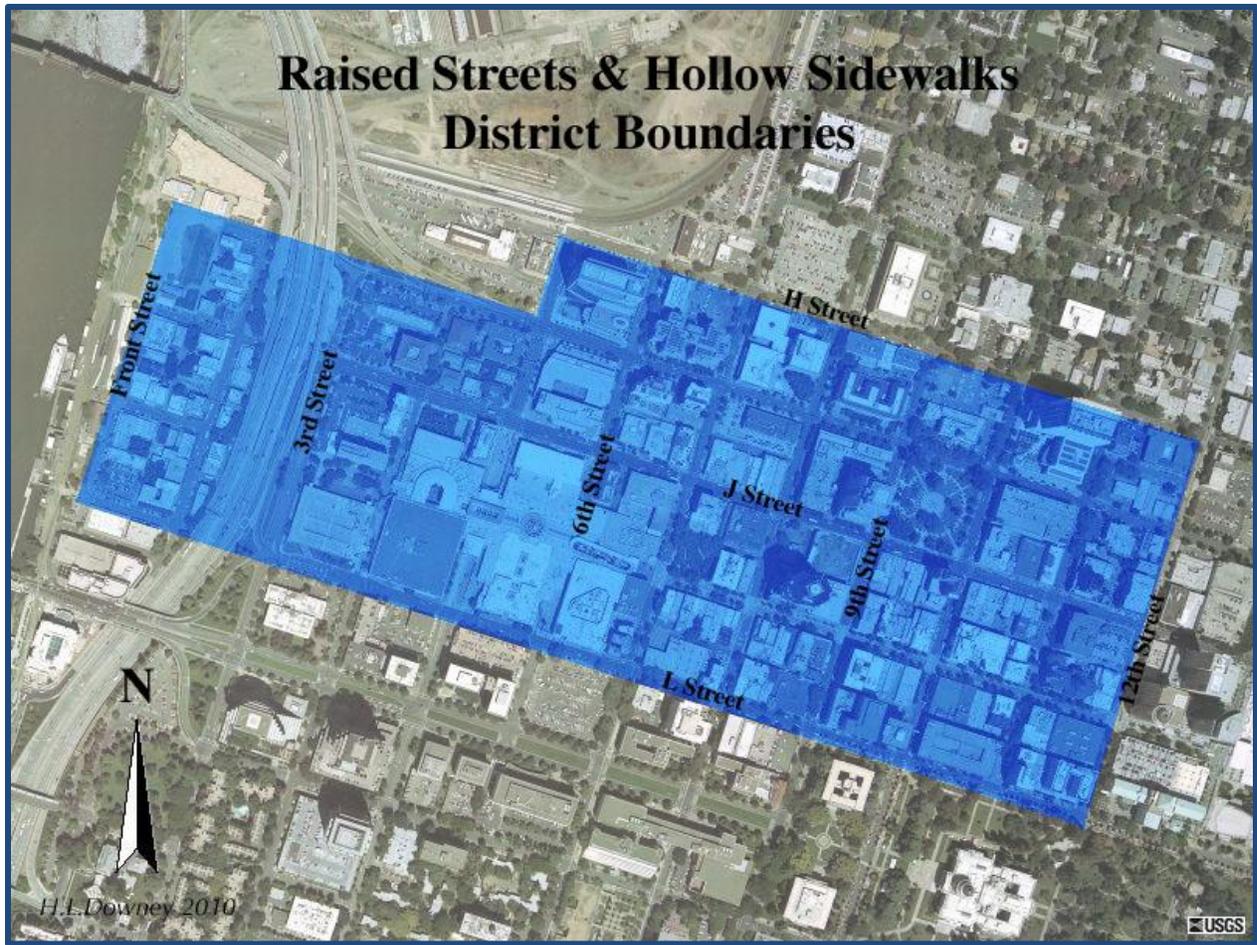
Project Background.....	1
Summary Statement.....	3
Historical Background.....	4
District Description.....	28
Preservation Goals & Priorities.....	38
Bibliography.....	39

## **Project Background**

Between 1863 and 1878, Sacramentans raised the streets in their business district to avoid perpetual flooding and to keep commerce and the capital in Sacramento. Today, evidence of this nineteenth-century construction project characterizes downtown Sacramento's landscape. The history of Sacramento's street-raising project involves the geographic area from Front Street (historically known as The Embarcadero) east to 12<sup>th</sup> Street and H Street south to L Street.

In August 2010, the Sacramento Old City Association (SOCA) hired Heather Lavezzo Downey, a professional historian, to develop a historic context statement for Sacramento's Raised Streets & Hollow Sidewalks District. This work builds upon that completed in 2008 by Page & Turnbull and Paula Boghosian, as well as that of Kim Tremaine and William Burg. Additionally, two master's theses have been completed on the subject, one by Barbara Lagomarsino in 1969, and the other by Heather Lavezzo Downey in 2010. Research for this historic context statement was completed almost exclusively at the Center for Sacramento History (CSH). Other contributory collections agencies included the Sacramento Room at the Central Branch of the Sacramento Public Library, the UC Berkeley library, the Bancroft Library, and the California State Archives.

The survey of Sacramento's Raised Streets & Hollow Sidewalks District consists of this historic context statement, DPR 523A forms completed by Page & Turnbull as well as Kim Tremaine, and a DPR 523D form completed by Heather Lavezzo Downey. Some DPR 523A forms originally recorded certain surveyed properties as "structures." In light of the historic context developed by Heather Lavezzo Downey, this identification has been changed on each of the forms to "element of a district."



RSBS District boundaries. See "District Description" for detailed discussion of boundaries.

## **Summary Statement**

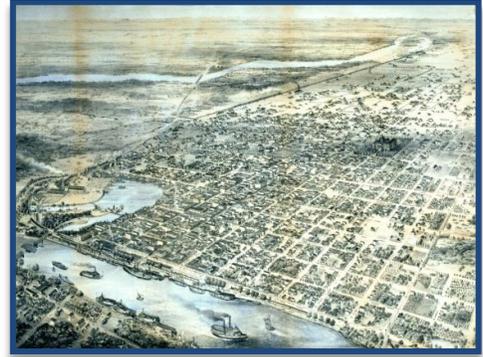
After the discovery of gold in 1848, settlers chose the low-lying land at the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers to build a city. Early arrivals like Sam Brannan chose the site because of the rivers' transportation potential and their desire to transform the area into a hub of Gold-Rush commercial activity. Almost immediately, the rivers' natural tendency to overflow in the wintertime became problematic for those who chose to settle there. Beginning in the 1850s and extending through the 1870s, city leaders chose to re-imagine Sacramento's landscape by adopting a three-pronged approach to flood-control. Their efforts involved constructing levees, re-routing the course of the American River, and raising the streets and buildings in their business district above high-water. Today, the area of Sacramento that citizens raised in the 1860s and 1870s remains recognizable as the Raised Streets and Hollow Sidewalks District.

## Historical Background

The interplay between inhabitants' views on the natural environment and their goals for settlement has shaped land-use patterns in Sacramento. For 5,000 years before the advent of Western settlement, the Nisenan and Miwok peoples populated the low-lying area at the confluence of the Sacramento and American rivers. They benefitted from the rich soils and temperate climate, respecting the ebb and flow of the land by choosing to migrate away from the rivers, to high ground, during wintertime.<sup>1</sup> John Sutter settled near the confluence of the rivers in 1840, laying claim to nearly 44,000 acres of land that had been granted to him by the Mexican government.<sup>2</sup> The presence of driftwood in the trees indicated that the area had been overflowed by about nine feet of water from snow melt in the mountains to the east.<sup>3</sup> To avoid



Sacramento City, 1849. Notice how new arrivals could literally disembark from the Sacramento River directly on to Front Street. Courtesy of CSH, Sherill Halbert Collection, 1984-010-001.



Sacramento is situated at the confluence of the Sacramento and American Rivers on low-lying, flood-prone land. Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, 1982-004-0452.

flooding problems, Sutter chose to build his fort a couple miles inland.

After the discovery of gold in 1848, opportunistic settlers selected the site of Sacramento directly at the confluence of the Sacramento and American rivers to build a city. The nomadic lifestyle adopted by early inhabitants was not compatible with the expectation of city-building carried westward by many who converged upon the site during the Gold Rush. Even though the site was a floodplain, city-builders like Sam Brannan and Peter Burnett knew that the rivers offered tremendous

<sup>1</sup> Steven Avella, *Sacramento: Indomitable City* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara Lagomarsino, *Early Attempt to Save the Site of Sacramento by Raising its Business District* (Sacramento State College: Master's Thesis, 1969), 1.

transportation potential and access to the gold fields in the foothills. They and other mid-nineteenth century newcomers decided that such natural amenities made the site of Sacramento a better investment than other nearby settlements, some of which were on high ground. These opportunistic and business-savvy individuals set the agenda for Sacramento's growth as a Gold Rush commercial and trading locale. Intense land speculation swept the city, and during 1849 lot prices rose from \$250 to \$8,000.<sup>4</sup>

Those who settled in Sacramento invested all they had in the land. For many, it was a good risk to have taken: Sacramento continued to grow rapidly, accumulating tremendous wealth for its land- and business-owners. The rivers served them and their business interests as highways, transporting people and goods during the Gold Rush and beyond.



"Encampment at Sacramento City, 1849." Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, 1982-05-1320.



The Embarcadero c. 1849. Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, 1982-05-5974.

Settling Sacramento City during the Gold Rush required that new arrivals carve out a piece of the wilderness for themselves. Gold Rush-era journalist, Bayard Taylor, offers a picture of interactions between new arrivals and Sacramento City's natural landscape in 1849. He writes, "Many of the streets are lined with oaks and sycamores, six feet in diameter, and spreading ample boughs on every side. The emigrants have ruined the finest of them by building camp fires at their bases,

which, in some instances, have burned completely through, leaving a charred and blackened arch for the superb tree to rest upon."<sup>5</sup> Edward Kemble – an early visitor to the area and eventual editor of Sacramento's first newspaper – observed that the land was an "almost unspoiled wilderness" before the advent of Western settlement. Kemble described the land as

<sup>4</sup> Mark Eifler, *Gold Rush Capitalists: Greed and Growth in Sacramento* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press), 54.

<sup>5</sup> Bayard Taylor, 1849; quoted in *Eldorado: Adventures in the Path of Empire* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000), 176.

inhabited by “a forest of noble sycamores, dense and deep . . .”<sup>6</sup> A drawing of the Embarcadero in 1849 (see page 4) demonstrates the rapidity with which early Sacramentans began redesigning the landscape: while some trees remain, Edward Kemble’s description of a pristine wilderness has been exchanged for one being managed by those individuals identified by Bayard Taylor. As early as 1849, ideas about the manageability of nature, combined with early Sacramentans’ powerful vision for the site as an economic center, set the agenda for



In January 1850, flood waters inundated Sacramento, suddenly transforming The Embarcadero and J Street into miniature rivers. Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, 1982-004-023.

Sacramento’s growth and development.

Almost immediately after Sam Brannan selected the site and began selling lots, new residents came face to face with the realities of the physical location. On January 8, 1850 the American River overflowed its banks and within hours, four-fifths of the city was under water.<sup>7</sup> In a boomtown quickly erected of canvas and wood, flood waters rushed into the city and swept away structures as well as tents, wagons, livestock and

merchandise.<sup>8</sup> Looking for ways to continue earning money, some Sacramentans sold “bona fide boats for as high as \$1,000 or rented for \$30 per hour.”<sup>9</sup> Recently-arrived overland migrant, Luzena Stanley Wilson, describes living through the flood when she writes

In an hour or more the whole town was afloat, and little boats were rowed here and there picking up the people and rescuing what could be saved of the property. It was not until later in the night that we began to feel real alarm, for we expected every hour to see the water subside, but it steadily rose, and at midnight we moved to the upper floor. All through the night came the calls for “Help! Help!” from every quarter, and the

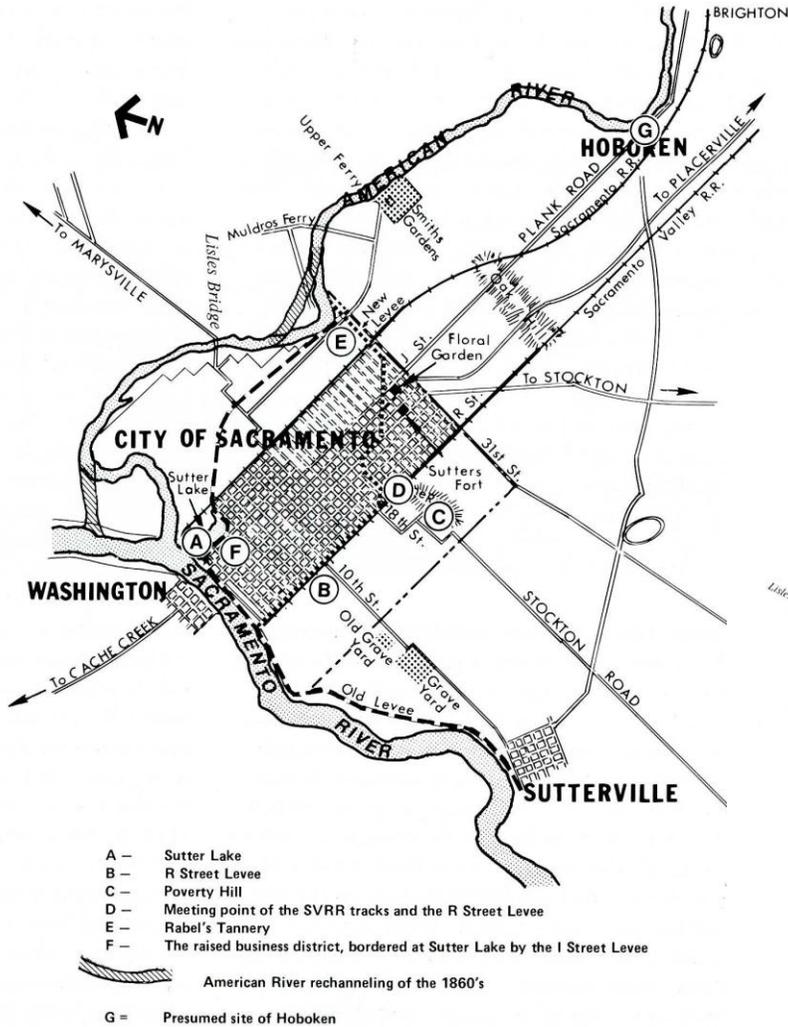
<sup>6</sup> Mark Eifler, “Taming the Wilderness Within: Order and Opportunity in Gold Rush Sacramento, 1849-1850,” *California History* 79, no. 4 (Winter 2000/2001): 193.

<sup>7</sup> Marvin Brienens, “Sacramento Defies the Rivers 1850-1878,” in *California History* 58, no. 1 (Spring 1979): 3.

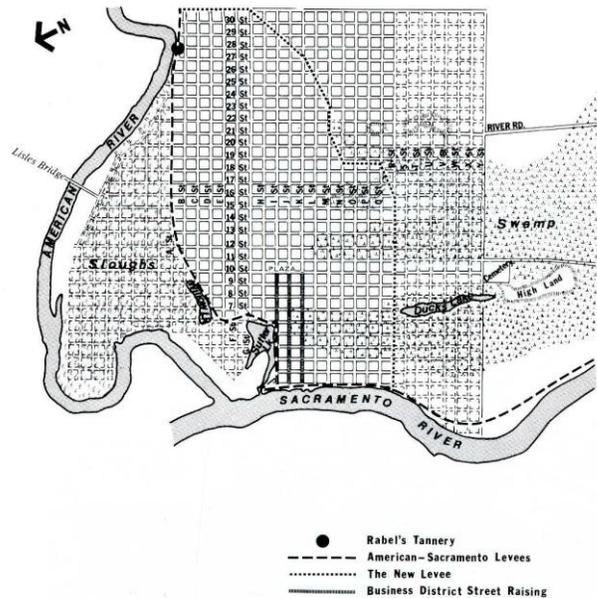
<sup>8</sup> Joseph McGowan and Terry Willis, *Sacramento, Heart of the Golden State* (Woodland Hills: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1983), 36.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

# SACRAMENTO, circa 1854



# SACRAMENTO, circa 1860

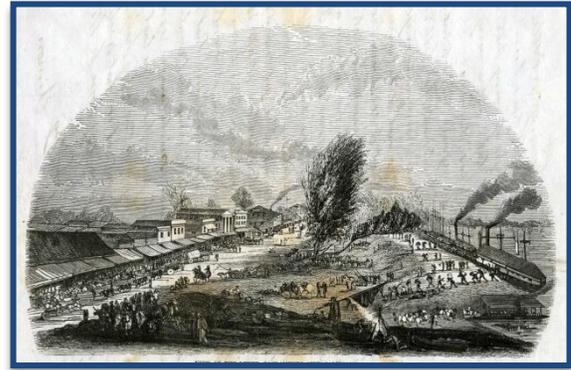


These maps demonstrate the boundaries of Sacramento's early levee system over time, as well as the area that Sacramentans raised between 1864 and 1878. Marvin Brienes used these maps in his 1979 article, "Sacramento Defies the Rivers," which appeared in *California History*.

men listened a moment and then rowed in the direction of the call, sometimes too late to save.<sup>10</sup>

After the flood, the *Daily Alta California* newspaper reported that there was an “estimated loss of one million dollars; other estimates ran to three times as much.”<sup>11</sup>

Property owners’ investment in the land prohibited them from abandoning the site. Instead, they chose to rebuild their city, this time with disaster-resistant materials such as brick and granite. Additionally, Hardin Bigelow, Sacramento’s first mayor, led the community in its effort to construct a levee to protect the business district in 1850. Tax payers funded the project by approving a special \$250,000 tax assessment.<sup>12</sup> Upon completion, the levee ran



This image of The Embarcadero shows the bowl-like effect the levee system had on the landscape in Sacramento, c. 1855. Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, 1982-04-146.

from Sutterville (a settlement south of Sacramento City on high ground), west toward the Sacramento River, north along the river, around a particularly flood-prone area just north of the business district called China Slough, to the American River and then up the American to high ground. The massive earthwork was three to five feet high, 20 feet wide at the base and 10 feet wide on the top.<sup>13</sup>

Even still, some Sacramentans chose to abandon the site in favor of high ground after overflow from the American River flooded the city again in 1852 and 1853. Rival towns such as Sutterville and Hoboken emerged as safe alternatives to Sacramento’s perilous landscape. John Sutter had founded Sutterville two years before Sam Brannan began selling lots in Sacramento. Located inland about three miles south of Sacramento City, the discovery of gold and rapid

<sup>10</sup> Fern Henry, *My Checkered Life: Luzena Stanley Wilson in Early California* (Nevada City: Carl Mautz Publishing, 2003), 20.

<sup>11</sup> Bienes, “Sacramento Defies the Rivers,” 4.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Helmich and Pauline Spear, *A Gold Rush Merchants Manual* (Office of Interpretive Services: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1989), 5.

<sup>13</sup> Samuel Colville, *City Directory of Sacramento for the Year 1854-55* (San Francisco: Monson & Valentine, 1854), Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

merchant-settlement on the Sacramento River caused Sutterville to fall into decline.<sup>14</sup> Still, it enjoyed sporadic booms at the expense of Sacramento. After a fire in 1852 and the floods of the early 1850s, Lansford Hastings, Sutterville's land agent, began offering free lots to those who experienced loss in Sacramento.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, Hoboken sprang to life on the American River near the present-day site of California State University, Sacramento. Less than ten miles from Sacramento City, Hoboken served as the temporary business hub for Sacramento while the flood waters receded. According to Steven Avella, "For six weeks about 1,000 people found refuge there" during the winter of 1852.<sup>16</sup> While Hoboken did not flood as easily as Sacramento, most residents planned to return to Sacramento City, as described by Luke Richardson. In a letter written to his aunt during his stay in Hoboken he reports, "You will find enclosed a view of the place I am living in, it has been built in the last three weeks. I shall probably be back in Sacramento in about a week – please tell Mother to direct my letters to Sacramento City."<sup>17</sup>

Even though they had the option of relocating to either Sutterville or Hoboken, many remained in Sacramento during the floods. Rather than scare property owners away, the continued inundations by water seemed to inspire merchants to not only strengthen the levee, but also to grade a small portion of the business district to improve drainage. Early in 1853 a group of property owners from J Street met at the Orleans Hotel on Second Street to discuss the improvements. They raised \$3,600 to complete the emergency work. Suddenly in April 1853 the city was again under water and it stayed that way for nearly two months. Merchants began to discuss more earnestly the option of actually raising the streets "to get commerce back in Sacramento."<sup>18</sup> By the end of the year, private property owners and their hired contractors had lifted I, J, and K Streets as high as five feet as far back from the levee as the public square on high ground at 10<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>19</sup> According to Samuel Colville, the funds for the project came from a

---

<sup>14</sup> Avella, *Sacramento*, 26.

<sup>15</sup> Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection (Caroline Wenzel Notebooks, Volume 30), 41.

<sup>16</sup> Avella, *Sacramento*, 39.

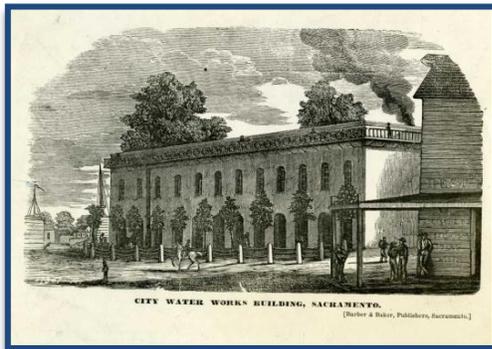
<sup>17</sup> "New Jersey Had Better Luck than California with Hoboken," *Union*, July 13, 1957.

<sup>18</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 15.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

“pro rata tax upon property owners” amounting to \$185,460.<sup>20</sup> In 1854, citizens constructed a new levee to replace the “Old Levee” they had built in 1850.<sup>21</sup> Colville describes this new and improved flood-control measure as “composed of portions of the old embankment.”<sup>22</sup> Work crews “widened, partially planked, raised and materially strengthened” the new levee at the cost of \$95,000.<sup>23</sup>

By the mid 1850s, the business district was physical proof of its residents’ vision for the place: a permanent, safe place to do business. The many brick and granite structures were physical symbols of Sacramentans’ tenacious commitment to the place, no matter the natural obstacles. The levee was a source of pride within the community. As Samuel Colville writes, “A well-grounded hope is indulged by the citizens of Sacramento, when they gaze upon this apparently impervious piece of workmanship, that the day of her affliction is over, at least so



Sacramento was the first city in California to boast a municipal water works building. Constructed in 1854 at Front and I Streets, this brick structure was one of many that came to symbolize the city’s growing stability. Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy Collection, 1982-05-5986.

far as related to the probability of future overflow.”<sup>24</sup>

State legislators agreed, and in 1854 Sacramento earned the title of permanent state capital, having offered the legislature meeting space in the county’s newly-constructed courthouse on Seventh and I Streets. Legislators came from all over California, including places that wished to replace Sacramento as the capital. In addition to the meeting space in the courthouse, elected officials found Sacramento’s bustling business district full of many favorable amenities. Centered on J Street, it extended nearly 12

blocks east from Front Street and four blocks south of China Slough, an easily-flooded tract of land on I Street, to L Street. Set up as a grid, the business district was home to a diverse group of business owners who served thousands of locals and visitors each day. Sacramento boasted first-rate hotels, restaurants, and shops. Its streets buzzed with life as shoppers and

<sup>20</sup> Colville, *City Directory of Sacramento for the Year 1854-55*.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

merchandise crowded the sidewalks. The Embarcadero on the Sacramento River served as an important transfer point for goods and passengers, congested with shipping docks, warehouses, a ferry, as well as the Sacramento Valley Railroad freight depot and passenger station.<sup>25</sup>

During this time, Sacramento's local government was not only incredibly cash-poor, but also paralyzed both by state laws that limited its taxing ability, and the will of its citizens, who opposed being taxed. In response, in April 1858 the California State Legislature approved a bill to consolidate the city and county governments in Sacramento as a means to tackle inefficiencies in local government and pay down debt incurred to protect the city from floods and fires.<sup>26</sup> Property owners and other private citizens spearheaded city improvements in the 1850s, while the Board of Supervisors (the governing body established by the Consolidation Bill), took a "hands off" approach to such endeavors. Nevertheless, as the 1850s came to a close, Sacramentans enjoyed a period of uninterrupted prosperity while the rivers remained at bay. In 1860, Governor John Dewey signed a bill to begin construction on the state capitol on 10<sup>th</sup> Street between L and N Streets, allowing Sacramentans to add the ultimate symbol of permanence to their expanding urban landscape.<sup>27</sup> Samuel Colville sums up popular sentiment of the day when he writes

No fact has been more generally conceded, than that Sacramento sustains toward all other places in the civilized world, a marvelous preeminence, as the type of a spirit of enterprise not otherwise represented in the whole range of ancient or modern progress . . . At a time when it was believed by the timid that her very name stood in danger of eradication, her dormant elements of resuscitation proved strongest. Her builders went to work. Neither fire nor flood had discouraged them; and looking around you, behold the flourishing evidence of their success!<sup>28</sup>

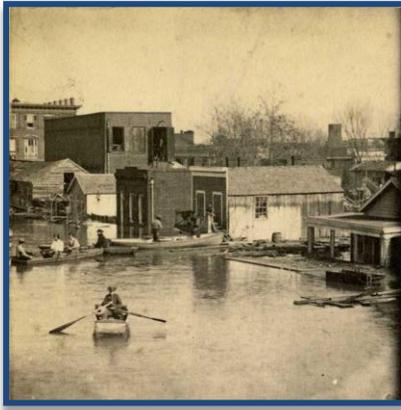
---

<sup>25</sup> Stephen G. Helmich, "K Street Landing, Old Sacramento and the Embarcadero," in *Golden Notes* 26, no. 3 (Fall 1980): 2.

<sup>26</sup> Nellie May Henderson Cole, *Consolidation of Sacramento City and County Government, 1858-1863* (Sacramento State College, Master's Thesis, 1958), 3, 7, 10.

<sup>27</sup> Avella, *Sacramento*, 42.

<sup>28</sup> Colville, *City Directory of Sacramento for the Year 1854-55*.



Fourth Street between L & M Streets, flooding during the back-to-back storms of winter 1861-62. Courtesy of Mead Kibbey.

Modifications to the environment completed in the 1850s kept Sacramento safe from flooding until the winter of 1861-62. In the *1860 Sacramento City Directory*, on the eve of the most destructive floods the city would come to know, D.S. Cutter boasted, “Eleven years ago where Sacramento stands was an unclaimed wilderness; today by that indomitable energy and perseverance which characterizes the American people, we stand as the second City on the Pacific Coast and

there we will stand forever . . .”<sup>29</sup> The winter of 1861-62

challenged these sentiments when over 30 inches of rain fell over a two-month period.<sup>30</sup> On December 8, 1861, the

American River rose nearly 20 feet, an alarmingly high level for so early in the rainy season.<sup>31</sup> In the morning hours of December 9, flood waters overwhelmed the levee in the northeastern part of Sacramento, inundating the city.<sup>32</sup> The water rose rapidly inside the city, bringing with it a current that was strong enough to imprison many people in their homes, unable to be rescued by mules, horses, wagons or even boats.<sup>33</sup> As one local newspaper reported, “The flood came with the rapidity of a hurricane . . . the levee is now an injury instead of a benefit, as it confines the water in the city, and causes it to rise higher by probably two feet than it would have done had no levee existed.”<sup>34</sup> The city charged a chain gang with the dangerous task of breaching the R Street levee to relieve Sacramento of the excess flood water. Once the chain gang did so with explosives, the force of the rushing water was so strong that it took 25 homes with it, some of which were two stories tall and caused several drownings, diseases and other hardships.<sup>35</sup> Florence Chamberlain, a twenty-four year old woman living on M Street with her

<sup>29</sup> D.S. Cutter, *Sacramento City Directory for the Year A.D. 1860* (Sacramento: H.S. Crocker & Co., Book and Job Printers, 1859). Center for Sacramento History: Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

<sup>30</sup> Karen M. O’Neill, *Rivers by Design: State Power and the Origins of U.S. Flood Control* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 75.

<sup>31</sup> Thompson and West, *A History of Sacramento County* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1960), 69.

<sup>32</sup> Brienens, “Sacramento Defies the Rivers,” 13.

<sup>33</sup> “A Great Calamity,” *Union*, December 11, 1861.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

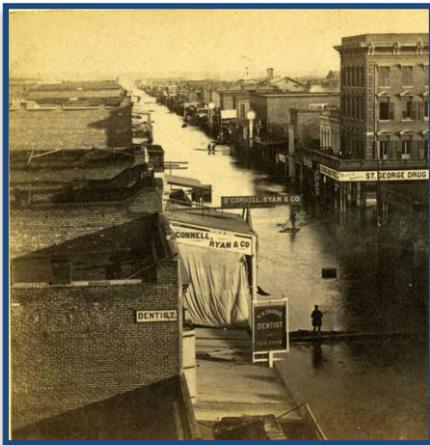
<sup>35</sup> Joseph McGowan, *A History of the Sacramento Valley, Volume 1* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1961), 10.

family during the flood, expressed her impression of the flood in a letter written to her brother in December 1861. She writes

The whole affair seemed so grand! And man's efforts so puny in comparison, that in wild abandonment my sympathies were all enlisted in favor of the wild elements. But now came the horror! Women standing waist deep in the water surrounded by their children – rending the air with screams for help – and none near to give assistance – it sounded too terrible to be true.<sup>36</sup>

As the year 1861 came to a close, flood waters effectively cancelled all Christmas festivities in Sacramento. On Christmas Eve the *Union* reported that:

The prospect is that it will be the most gloomy Christmas Eve ever experienced in Sacramento since California became an American property. The usual Sunday School celebration and other festivities incident to the season seem to have been forgotten, or swept away by the flood; and taken altogether “Merry Christmas” so far as Sacramentans are concerned, appears to have lost its distinctive character as the annual time of rejoicing.<sup>37</sup>



January 1862, J Street east from Third Street. Courtesy of Mead Kibbey.

While Sacramentans grappled with this disaster, another storm visited the capital city. Heading north from Southern California, this “great storm” dumped over 24 inches of rain on the already flood-soaked city. The flood overwhelmed the entire central valley, turning the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys into an “inland sea 250 to 300 miles long and 20 to 60 miles wide.” Sacramento received over 400 percent of its normal annual rainfall that January. The American River levee finally broke and residents found themselves subject to hurricane-force winds, and five feet under muddy, ice-cold water.<sup>38</sup> Sacramento historian Joseph McGowan writes that “dead animals [floated] about the streets, houses were washed off their

<sup>36</sup> Capital Mall-East End Project, *A Capital Neighborhood: The Archeology of the Capital Area East End Complex* (Sacramento: A Report Prepared for Department of General Services, 2003), 6.88.

<sup>37</sup> “Christmas Eve,” *Union*, December 24, 1861.

<sup>38</sup> W. Leonard Taylor and Robert W. Taylor, “The Great California Flood of 1862,” *The Fortnightly Club*, [www.redlandsfortnightly.org/papers/taylor06.htm](http://www.redlandsfortnightly.org/papers/taylor06.htm).

foundations and the town lost all communication.”<sup>39</sup> Four hundred Sacramento families were left homeless and five thousand individuals were in need of aid while the city remained under water for three months.<sup>40</sup>

While the exact number of deaths following the back-to-back floods is unknown, accounts from the events suggest destruction akin to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2005, in terms of loss of life and property as well as relative shock and dismay. While in San Francisco during the floods, federal land surveyor William Brewer described the scene in his journal: “Benevolent societies are active, boats have been sent up [to Sacramento], and thousands are fleeing to this city.” In March 1862, Brewer traveled to Sacramento. After witnessing the destruction in the capital city, he wrote, “I don’t think the city will ever rise from the shock, I don’t see how it can. Yet it has a brighter side. No people can so stand calamity as this people. They are used to it.”<sup>41</sup> So devastating was this state-wide disaster that Reverend S.C. Thrall of Trinity Church in San Francisco made sense of it within the context of the Civil War. Preaching on the significance of the “great storm,” he proclaimed

He who visited the nation with war, has smitten us with flood. The windows of heaven have been opened, and the richest portion of our land is desolate. Almost no portion of this coast has escaped suffering, loss of life, loss of property . . . That this calamity is our part of the punishment of national sin seems especially evident from the fact that the visitation is so precisely coincident with that portion of our inhabited territory which has escaped the consequences of war.<sup>42</sup>

For those whose lives were inextricably tied to Sacramento, moving the city in response to the flooding was unthinkable. Merchants, land owners, and local officials based on and around J Street desired a permanent city in which to conduct their businesses. Property owners profited greatly from the presence of state officials who patronized their hotels, restaurants and shops during legislative sessions. Flood waters disrupted commercial activities and created a fear of Sacramento in the minds of those living throughout California. People began to

---

<sup>39</sup> McGowan, *History of the Sacramento Valley*, 186.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> William Brewer, 1862; quoted in *Up and Down California in 1860-1864: The Journal of William H. Brewer* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 242, 249.

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Chapman Thrall, 1862; quoted in *The Flood of January 1862: Its Meaning and Lessons* (San Francisco: Towne & Bacon Book, Card and Fancy Job Printers, 1962), 12.

question whether or not Sacramento was a good place to invest and conduct business, given its propensity to flood. One San Francisco newspaper proclaimed that “it is simply an act of folly for the people of the town of Sacramento to endeavor to maintain their city on its present location” and the state legislature abandoned the site in favor of San Francisco.<sup>43</sup> After the flood of 1861-62, Sacramento historian Lucinda Woodward explains that “the Senate was turned into a forum for all sorts of expressions about the fitness of Sacramento as the Capital City . . .”<sup>44</sup> Property owners in the business district did not waste any time in attempting to quell fears and revive Sacramento. As before in the 1850s, Sacramentans were determined to manage the natural environment in ways that would simultaneously diminish the threat of future inundation by water and promote the city’s growth. As Sacramento historian Barbara Lagomarsino points out, “The question was not whether to admit that Sacramento was located on an untenable site for activity and leave, but rather to make sure that the site was, indeed, tenable.”<sup>45</sup>

In March 1862 a group of men who owned and operated businesses along J Street met to discuss the future of Sacramento.<sup>46</sup> Among them was Dr. R.H. McDonald, a druggist whose store had been in operation on J Street since 1850, and James McClatchy, editor of the *Daily Bee* newspaper and soon-to-be sheriff.<sup>47</sup> Frustrated by the lack of official action taken by the Board of Supervisors, the men took matters into their own hands, voting to raise and grade the business district above high water. Supporters of the “high grade,” as it was called, believed that it would not only improve public health but also raise property values.<sup>48</sup> Those who opposed the construction called themselves “low-graders.” Lorenzo Hamilton, a long-time Sacramento resident and property owner, feared that property owners could not afford the recommended improvements and felt that the levee was enough to protect the city. Most property owners disagreed with Hamilton, as demonstrated in a letter to the *Union* from

---

<sup>43</sup> Thor Severson, *Sacramento: An Illustrated History, 1839-1874 From Sutter’s Fort to Capital City* (California Historical Society, 1973), 109.

<sup>44</sup> Lucinda Woodward, *A Documentary History of California’s State Capital* (Sacramento: California State Capital Restoration Project, 1981), 34.

<sup>45</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 29.

<sup>46</sup> “Meeting of the Property Owners,” *Union*, March 18, 1862.

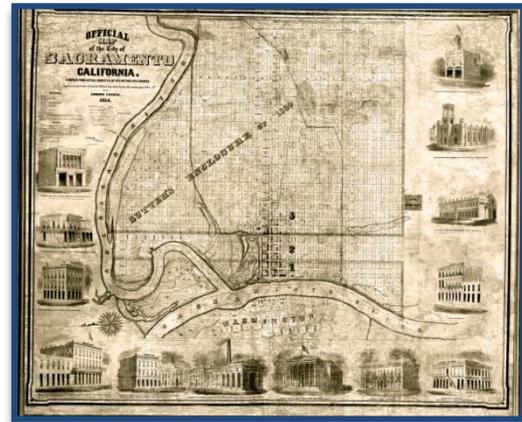
<sup>47</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 38.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

someone called “A Taxpayer.” After refuting the notion that few Sacramento property owners supported the taxation necessary to finance street improvements, the author names many people “in favor of raising and grading our streets to a liberal height.” The writer concludes by stating that those listed in favor of the taxation “are people who have made their property [in Sacramento], and who have been personally present with us and passed like heroes through all the adversities of the city.”<sup>49</sup>

Before local government had a chance to adopt any official ordinance in support of or in opposition to the high grade, many property owners began raising and grading streets on their own.<sup>50</sup> These early improvements were done haphazardly and never in accordance with existing ordinances. Dr. McDonald, for example, raised his sidewalks ten feet above their original level, creating a levee of sorts around his building. The Board of Supervisors asked him to lower them to three above their original level, and he complied.<sup>51</sup> Spurred by such actions, the Board of Supervisors authored Ordinance #124, “Fixing the Grade of the Streets.” Although it was not officially adopted, the ordinance identified the new high water mark at 22 feet 9 inches above the Sacramento River and set up a fixed grade for the business district in relationship to it.<sup>52</sup>

Sacramentans also grappled with a few problematic areas of the American River’s natural shape and flow, as well. One spot was the location at which the levee failed in 1861, a place located on the American River at 28<sup>th</sup> Street called Rabel’s Tannery. The second location formed a slow-moving, C-shaped bend that stretched all the way from the present-day site of the H Street Bridge to B Street. Furthermore, the river’s natural drainage spot as it met with the Sacramento River tended to be a



This map demonstrates the original course of the American River that was re-channelized to mitigate overflow into the business district. Courtesy of CSH, Jean Minnick Collection.

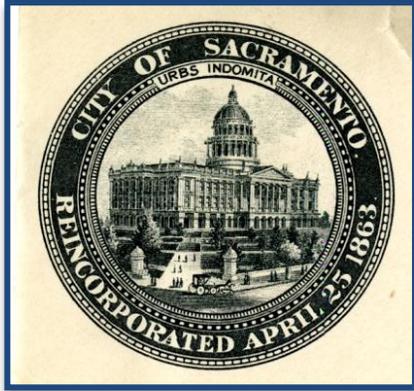
<sup>49</sup> “High Grade,” *Union*, February 18, 1863.

<sup>50</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 29.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>52</sup> Ordinance #124 ‘Fixing the Grade of the Streets’ in Board of Supervisor Minute Records, Book F: 542-545. Center for Sacramento History.

low-lying area of the business district near I Street. At these points, construction crews worked to deepen the channels to divert and quicken the flow, remove large amounts of debris deposited by hydraulic mining in the foothills, and relocate the mouth of the river north, away from the business district.<sup>53</sup>



1863 City Seal adopted after voters dismantled the consolidated government. Courtesy of CSH, City of Sacramento Collection.

In addition to the adoption of Ordinance #124, property owners called for a new form of government in Sacramento. The destruction wrought by the floods of 1861-62 and property owners' desire to expand upon earlier flood-control measures brought to the surface the insufficient amount of power allocated to the Board of Supervisors to mitigate and manage city improvements. In early 1863 representatives from within the city met to discuss dismantling the consolidated system of government that they had adopted only five years prior.<sup>54</sup> On April 25, 1863, the City of Sacramento approved a revised City Charter that effectively split the city and county governments once more.<sup>55</sup> The Charter allocated considerable authority to a three-member Board of Trustees, a group of leaders that would promote business owners' plans to raise the business district. With this goal in mind, the new city seal proclaimed that Sacramento was *Urbs Indomita* – the “indomitable city.” The three original trustees were each wealthy Sacramento businessmen or politicians. Josiah Johnson had served as a state senator from Sacramento in the 1850s before he helped to co-author the Consolidation Bill in 1858.<sup>56</sup> H.T. Holmes owned a lime manufacturing and roofing company on I

<sup>53</sup> Brienens, *Sacramento Defies the Rivers*, 17; McGowan, *History of the Sacramento Valley*, 187, 188; Eugene Itogawa, “New Channel for the American River,” *Golden Notes* 17, no. 3 (October 1971).

<sup>54</sup> Cole, *Consolidation of Sacramento City and County Government*, 70.

<sup>55</sup> *City Charter and Ordinances of the City of Sacramento*, compiled by Daniel J. Thomas (Sacramento: Water Fount and Home Journal Print, 1866), 33. Center for Sacramento History: City Clerk Collection.

<sup>56</sup> John F. Uhlhorn, *The Sacramento Directory for the Year 1875* (Sacramento: H.S. Crocker & Co., 1875), Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

Street.<sup>57</sup> The third trustee was C.H. Swift, who owned a grain store on Front Street and later served as the president of Sacramento Savings Bank.<sup>58</sup>

The Board of Trustees, eager to implement and manage the street-raising project, utilized Ordinance #124 as a rough guideline. The corner of Front and I Street became the highest point in the city with the grade falling to the south and the east. J Street was graded at two feet six inches above the high water mark, while K Street was raised to one foot six inches above the high water mark. On L Street, the grade was six inches above the high water mark. Typically, workers filled intersections slightly higher than the thoroughfares, and the newly-filled streets were rounded up in the center.<sup>59</sup> Property owners could petition the Board of Trustees to select their block for the high grade, and unless two-thirds of the owners formally objected, bids for the work would be issued. Alternately, the Board of Trustees would select a block for the improvements and await the objections of at least two-thirds of the owners before issuing bids.<sup>60</sup> While the trustees initiated, regulated and managed the project, the financial burden fell on the property owners. They were responsible for constructing brick retaining walls and sidewalks on their property, as well as hiring contractors to raise their buildings, if they chose to do so.<sup>61</sup> The trustees were responsible for hiring the contractors to fill and pave the new streets, but taxed property owners to finance this portion of the construction.<sup>62</sup>

Property owners, private contractors, scores of teamsters, and chain gangs provided the manual labor. Owners prepared their sections of the street for fill by constructing bulkheads – brick retaining walls that not only denoted property lines but also the new level to which the street would be filled – 10 to 14 feet away from their storefront. Each brick used during the high-grade construction was handmade locally. If an owner refused to do their part, or if he or she lived elsewhere, the trustees hired a contractor to do the work then charged the owner

---

<sup>57</sup> John J. Murphy, *The Sacramento Directory for the Years 1861 and 1862* (Sacramento: H.S. Crocker & Co., 1861), Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

<sup>58</sup> *Reports on the Board of State Capitol Commissioner and Miscellaneous Papers, 1850-1892* (Sacramento: California State Library, 1893-1988), 71.

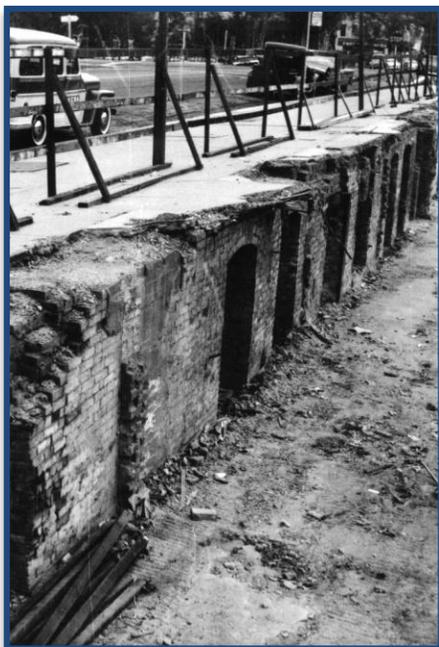
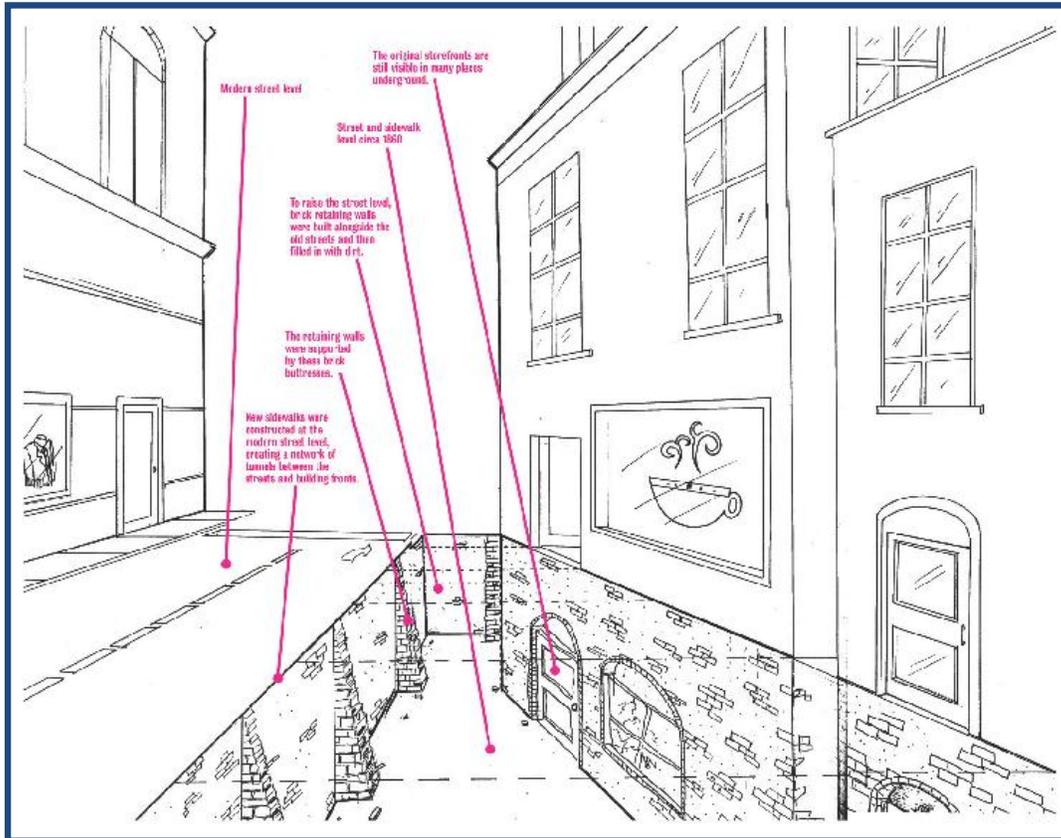
<sup>59</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 53-54.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.





This illustration above demonstrates the relationship of the modern street level to the hollow sidewalk and original storefronts. Hollow sidewalk segments often feature brick-barrel vaults and basement walls constructed to support those buildings that were raised to the new level (pictured left). Illustration by Conrad Garcia. Image courtesy of CSH, Ted Leonard Collection, 2001-055-232-235.

accordingly.<sup>63</sup> Workers left alleyways at their original levels for a number of reasons: it was expensive to raise the alleys, leaving them at their original elevations allowed for more drainage, and alleys allowed for back-door access to buildings with basements. As such, below-ground spaces or basements remained subject to flooding. Once workers filled the streets to their appropriate height, the ends of the alleys were graded up to meet the new level of the street, thereby creating the “dipping alleyways.” Property owners inadvertently created hollow sidewalk segments, preserving the original sidewalks, when they topped off the spaces between their buildings and brick bulkheads with wooden planks. They sometimes embedded cast-iron grids with bits of quartz into their new sidewalks as a way to provide lighting below. The presence of these skylights indicates that owners, as well as shoppers, may have continued to use these hollow sidewalks after construction ended.



Improvements to Second Street, 1865.  
Courtesy of CSH, Eleanor McClatchy  
Collection, 1982-05-1543.

Turton, Knox and Co. was a popular Sacramento-based contracting company during the street-raising project. William F. Knox, one of the owners, was an architect, carpenter and contractor. In the 1850s he served as a public official under the consolidated government and in the 1870s on the Board of Trustees as the Street Commissioner.<sup>64</sup> His and others’ hired teamsters hauled the dirt into the city for street fill from local farms or the old American River riverbed. The gravel for paving the new streets came from Folsom.<sup>65</sup> Workers employed a variety of equipment and hand labor to collect and move the enormous quantities of dirt needed for fill. Typically dirt-moving teams consisted of a few workers, scrapers, one-horse carts called “earth movers,” and a wheelbarrow. Teamsters usually worked twelve-hour days, earning five dollars for hauling dozens of cubic yards of fill into the business district.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>64</sup> See *Sacramento City Directories; City Council Minute Index*, Center for Sacramento History: 76/39/01.

<sup>65</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 58.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 100, 101.

A property owner had the option to leave his or her building at its original elevation, in which case many opted to add a story to the top. Most, however, chose to raise their buildings to the new street level. To do so, they hired a contractor who employed dozens of teamsters to lift the structure on screw jacks, technology similar to today's car jack. Joel Johnson, along with Turton, Knox, and Co., was among the most popular Sacramento building-raisers. According to the *Union*, Johnson earned \$62,750 in one year.<sup>67</sup> That amount is roughly equal to over a million dollars today.<sup>68</sup> To keep from harming the structure, the process had to be slow, methodical and coordinated. All workers would have to turn their jacks in unison to raise the building inches a day.<sup>69</sup> As they raised it, they would construct a new, brick foundation for the building. They constructed new basement walls and employed both barrel-brick vaults as well as lintel vaults to bear the structure's load.



The Sacramento County Courthouse, on the corner of Seventh & I Streets, on screw jacks in 1870. Courtesy of CSH, California State Library Collection, 1968-110-238.

The project encouraged new investments in Sacramento, particularly after 1863 when it became the western terminus for the transcontinental railroad. In 1864 the city deeded China Slough to the Central Pacific Railroad.<sup>70</sup> Sacramentans were sure that the high-grade construction would help to secure this and other commercial opportunities in the future. In 1866 a Sacramento newspaper reported, "Many have often regretted that Sacramento had not been originally built elsewhere – on higher ground. It would not have been Sacramento. It is not the object of engineering to place your strong works in a place of safety, but to locate them where the danger is to be combated – at the point which it is desired to hold."<sup>71</sup> Sacramentans desired a permanent city, even if that meant having to deal with the chaos of a "city on stilts." During the construction, visitors were awestruck by the state of the city and its citizens who

<sup>67</sup> "Improvements in Buildings," *Union*, January 1, 1867.

<sup>68</sup> J.S. Holliday, *Rush for Riches: Gold Fever and the Making of California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 346.

<sup>69</sup> William Holden, *Sacramento: Excursions into its History and Natural World* (Sacramento: Two Rivers Publishing Company, 1987), 200.

<sup>70</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 112.

<sup>71</sup> *Sacramento Bee*, October 27, 1866.

worked vigorously to elevate their business district. When the project was over, millions of dollars had been spent as contractors and private citizens had used millions of bricks to hold back their streets and support their sidewalks and buildings. They had hauled thousands of carloads of dirt into the city to raise two and half miles of street an average of nine and a half feet.<sup>72</sup>

Indeed, the street-raising project was a huge undertaking and one that likely affected the daily lives of most Sacramentans. Merchants advertised “pre high-grade” sales in newspapers proclaiming “great sale[s] on dry goods” as they prepared to “raise and enlarge” their stores.<sup>73</sup> The construction no doubt made traversing the city streets difficult. Property owners topped off their sidewalks at their leisure, often leaving gaping holes with which pedestrians had to cope. The *Union* reported that David Vanerhoff fell from the “high grade on J Street, near Fourth, into the area below, and was severely injured.”<sup>74</sup> So frequent were such accidents that the Board of Trustees made it illegal for property owners to not finish their construction in a timely manner. Mark Hopkins, one of the “Big Four” – the group of men responsible for financing the Central Pacific Railroad in the 1860s – was one of many whom the Board of Trustees arrested for not repairing his sidewalks quickly.<sup>75</sup> Piles of blocks and cobblestones formed at intersections while scaffolding and brick used to raise buildings occupied sidewalks.<sup>76</sup> Horse-drawn wagons and their drivers found it hard to navigate the changes in street-grades, resulting in traffic accidents. One afternoon during the construction, “an accident happened to four horses with two wagons attached. While coming down J Street, the driver lost control of the leader and the animals ran off . . . In coming down the grade the first wagon was overturned . . .”<sup>77</sup> Before work crews paved them, newly-raised streets were muddy, proving particularly troublesome during the rainy months. As the *Sacramento Bee* reported

---

<sup>72</sup> Holden, *Sacramento*, 197.

<sup>73</sup> “Important about the High Grade,” *Sacramento Bee*, June 18, 1866.

<sup>74</sup> “December 2<sup>nd</sup>,” *Union*, January 1, 1867.

<sup>75</sup> *Sacramento Jail Register*, July 1869, page 186. Center for Sacramento History.

<sup>76</sup> Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection (Caroline Wenzel Notebooks, Volume 29), 32: “Nicholson,” *Sacramento Bee*, May 25, 1866.

<sup>77</sup> “Smash Up,” *Sacramento Bee*, October 12, 1865.

Quite a crowd collected at the corner of Fourth and K Streets . . . to witness the efforts of a couple of teamsters to extricate their teams from the mud. After trying for half an hour or more one of them succeeded in getting out. During the excitement a grocery wagon was stopped nearby, the occupant wishing to view the scene. He soon found that his team was fast also, and in his effort to get free was thrown out into the mud, and presented a sorry appearance when he got out. The second team was got out a little after 2 o'clock, after trying for more than an hour.<sup>78</sup>

Even though the street-raising project was expensive and chaotic, it was a community-wide effort to preserve and protect the city, so Sacramentans were proud of it. To quote a correspondent from Sacramento to *The Elevator*, a San Francisco-based, African-American newspaper, "Our city continues to improve in architectural beauties; it has been elevated fifteen feet above the low water mark, as a preventative against inundation; a number of buildings and private residences have been raised to the 'grade,' and the City of the Plains promises to vie with the Bay City in time . . ."<sup>79</sup>

Financially, Sacramentans' efforts paid off: as early as 1867, the value of those properties on the higher grade had skyrocketed 200 percent since 1865, while residential lots, located on the periphery of the business district and extending eastward away from the Sacramento River, had not.<sup>80</sup> Supporters of the high-grade used this as evidence of the city's permanence, especially when justifying continued construction of the new capitol. As one observer reported:

The work on the state capitol is progressing finely . . . the new granite, from the Rocklin quarries on the Pacific Railroad, is of the most dazzling purity of color, and will lend much to the elegance of the edifice. Three of the windows are already closed in and the cornices put up . . . We have cited these instances to show how much confidence in the permanence of Sacramento her principle property owners possess. The high grade in this business portion of the city is but an extension and an additional strengthener to the levee, rendering the inundation of the city an impossibility . . . We have no fears of the future of Sacramento, while her present property holders are her residents and rulers. She is the Phoenix of cities. Yesterday a fire and today a flood, and she rises from the wreck stronger and more powerful than ever. Her citizens are indomitable, and

---

<sup>78</sup> "In the Mud," *Sacramento Bee*, February 12, 1869.

<sup>79</sup> "Letter from Sacramento," *The Elevator*, October 27, 1867.

<sup>80</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 110.

are determined to make her worthy of the title of capital of so great a state as California.<sup>81</sup>

By 1868, workers had completed the work on the American River, having redesigned its natural shape and flow. This and other man-made modifications to the natural environment represented Sacramentans' willingness to do battle with nature to achieve their city-building



The capitol under construction.  
Courtesy of Mead Kibbey.

goals. As the *Sacramento Bee* proclaimed, "Less enterprising men would have left the beautiful ruin of a city to moulder away and decay, but the Sacramentans could not be induced to forego the work of a decade for just the disasters of a month."<sup>82</sup>

In 1869 the state legislature "formally took possession of its respective chambers" in the newly-constructed capitol in Sacramento.<sup>83</sup> Lucinda Woodward explains that "to ensure against potential future flooding problems, the ground line [at the capitol] was . . . raised six feet so that it would be thirteen feet above the adjacent

streets. The basement (first) floor was . . . three feet above the established ground line and from the line of the basement floor to the line of the principle (second) story, twenty-one feet six inches."<sup>84</sup> As Sacramento historian Steven Avella notes, even though Sacramento had fallen victim to multiple floods, "Legislators admired the city's willingness to rebuild."<sup>85</sup> As the street-raising project neared completion, the Board of Trustees passed ordinances to address construction-related problems and mitigate hazards. In the summer of 1872, the former high point of the city – the city plaza on 10<sup>th</sup> and I Streets – was suddenly a gaping pit in the middle of the city as surrounding streets had been brought up to the new, higher grade. The Board of Trustees brought the plaza up to the city's new street level.<sup>86</sup> That same year they also

<sup>81</sup> Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection (Caroline Wenzel Notebooks, Volume 29), 19,

<sup>82</sup> "City Improvements," *Sacramento Bee*, October 3, 1865.

<sup>83</sup> Avella, *Sacramento*, 42.

<sup>84</sup> Woodward, *A Documentary History*, 37.

<sup>85</sup> Avella, *Sacramento*, 41.

<sup>86</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, 128.

instituted changes to the sloping grade along J, K, and L Streets roughly between 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets to reduce the amount of flooding due to run-off.<sup>87</sup> In 1876 the Trustees approved an ordinance regulating the process of filling in the numerous low or uneven spots throughout the city.<sup>88</sup>

By 1878 the high-grade construction in Sacramento was complete. Property owners and merchants, Sacramento's business-class, most clearly benefitted from this and other flood-control efforts. They did so not only because the projects protected and enhanced commerce in the business district, but also because they often lived above their stores. Even though the wider community had rallied behind lifting the business district, most residential lots had been left at their original elevations.<sup>89</sup> While time has demonstrated that the raised streets did not remove permanently the threat of flooding from the business district, the construction project was a success. Just as its supporters hoped it would, the street-raising project revived Sacramento, resurrecting it from a watery grave and providing the key to its continued economic and political growth.

### Conclusion

In the 1850s and 1860s, Sacramentans constructed levees, re-routed the American River, and raised the streets in the business district to protect their economic interests and preserve their city's role as the state capital. Sacramento was their home, but more importantly, it was an investment worth protecting. As historian William Cronon asserts, "Whatever the advantages of a particular landscape, people seem always to reshape it according to their vision of what it should be."<sup>90</sup> Western historian Patricia Limerick articulates the mindset of many who sought life anew in the West when she writes, "White Americans saw the acquisition of property as a cultural imperative, manifestly the right way to go about things."<sup>91</sup> In settling towns in the West and participating in this contest for property, many settlers saw nature as valueless until they improved it. Like many who ventured west to settle

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>88</sup> *City Charter and Ordinances of the City of Sacramento*, 157.

<sup>89</sup> Lagomarsino, *Early Attempts*, Appendix A.

<sup>90</sup> William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1991), 55.

<sup>91</sup> Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1987), 26.

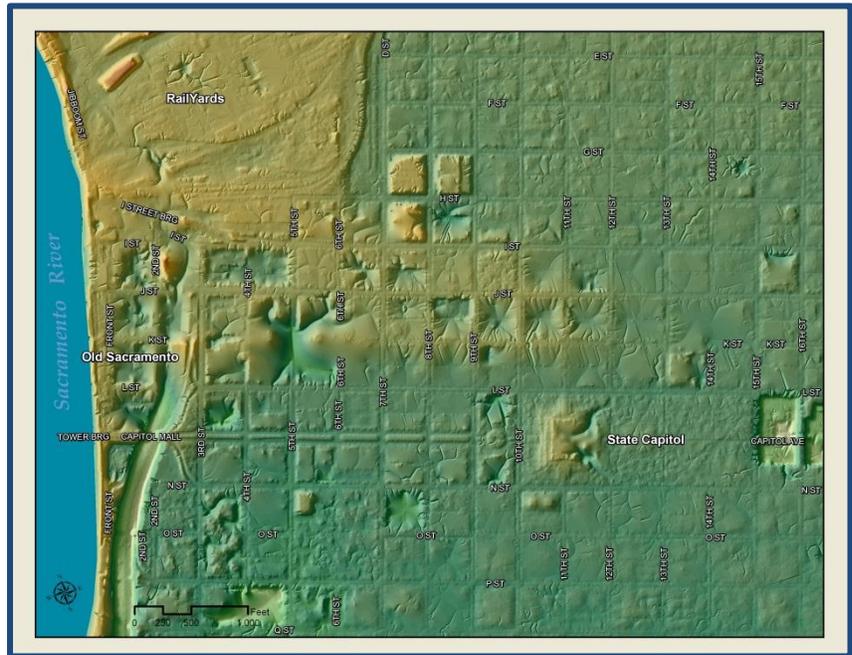
the frontier, Sacramentans thought that the physical environment was something to be conquered and managed. From the city's beginning, land owners in Sacramento cast a vision for growth and commercial success that was not always conducive with its natural landscape. So powerful was this expectation that the land's tendency to flood was not enough to convince city leaders that their hopes were unrealistic or even dangerous. The people approached nature as a commodity and saw its challenges as opportunities to perfect the land to better suit their city-building endeavors. The street-raising project is an example of how such popular sentiments of the day came into conflict with the realities of the natural environment in Sacramento.

## District Description

The Raised Streets and Hollow Sidewalks (RSHS) District in Sacramento, California is a physical artifact that can be considered a *cultural landscape*. It was occupied by settlers as a commercial and trading hub, and was intentionally modified through multiple construction projects to mitigate flooding and boost economic and political

activities in the 1860s. A *historic vernacular landscape* is defined as “a landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape. Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, family or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of those everyday lives.”<sup>92</sup> Motivated by their interest in preserving a regional commercial center that quickly became the statewide political center, Sacramentans chose to engineer safety into the natural environment by raising the streets in their business district between 1863 and 1878.

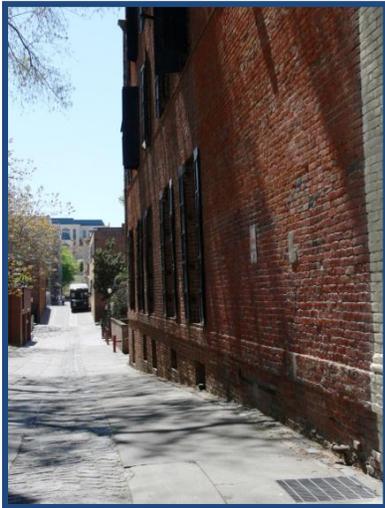
The RSHS District is located on the east side of the Sacramento River and includes parts of Old Sacramento and downtown Sacramento, which are divided by Interstate 5. Bounded by Front Street to the east, the edge of the western sidewalk on 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, the southern sidewalk on H Street to the north, and the southern sidewalk on L Street to the south, the District is centered on J and K Streets, which were historically the business district’s primary



Bare Earth Map, Courtesy of City of Sacramento, 2003. Demonstrates those parts of downtown Sacramento, including raised streets, that were filled in the 19th century, permanently modifying the landscape.

<sup>92</sup> Charles A. Birnbaum, “Preservation Brief 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes” (Department of the Interior: National Parks Service).

thoroughfares. The northern boundary does not include that portion of downtown historically called “China Slough” on the north side of I street and to the east of H and Fifth Streets as citizens chose not to improve it during the street-raising project. The boundaries represent that area of Sacramento which citizens chose to raise to avoid flooding in the 1860s and 1870s and include the changes in elevation, raised streets, and hollow sidewalk segments that characterize the District. The District is set up as a grid with lettered streets running east-west and numbered streets running north-south. Streets are paved with asphalt, except for Front Street in Old Sacramento, which has cobblestones. Alleyways divide city-blocks and run east-west throughout downtown and north-south as well as east-west in Old Sacramento Historic District.



Dipping alleyways, such as this one in Old Sacramento on J Street between Front and Second Streets, help to identify raised streets throughout the RSHS District. Photographed by H.L. Downey.

Alleyways in Old Sacramento are paved with concrete and cobblestones, while those in downtown are paved with concrete. Sidewalks in Old Sacramento are made up of concrete and topped with wooden planks. Sidewalks in downtown are paved with concrete. The District has three parks: Old Sacramento (located on Front and Second Streets between I and L Streets); Rosa Lima Park (located on the northeast corner of Seventh and K Streets); and Cesar Chavez Park or the City Plaza Park (located between Ninth and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets and I and J Streets).

Within this historic context, an eligible district will possess the following character-defining features. The RSHS District is characterized by above-ground features such as raised streets, dipping alleyways, starred manhole covers, granite curbs, and cast-iron and quartz skylights, as well as its unique, below-ground landscape. This hidden landscape is characterized by hollow sidewalk segments which may possess street retaining walls, building walls, corbelled buttresses, timber and concrete supports, elevator access, original storefronts, end walls, water tanks, as well as brick-barrel and lintel vaults. Taken together, these features work to create a cultural landscape that maintains its connection to the ways early citizens interacted with the environment in the 1860s and 1870s. Emphasis

should be given to the way the character-defining features convey the district's integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.

Today, the changes in street elevation that came to define the area after the street-raising project help to distinguish it from those parts of modern-day downtown that citizens did not raise in the 1860s. Visible from downtown alleys, the raised streets are roughly graded to the same level. However, slight elevation changes not only distinguish the District from its surroundings, but also remain detectable as one walks or drives upon them. While heading east on J Street, for example, a glance down any numbered street between Third and Twelfth Streets will visually demonstrate the dramatic drop off that occurs near L Street to the south and H Street to the north, since workers filled the thoroughfares to accommodate the new street grade and improved drainage system. Likewise, numbered streets, running north-south, are graded up to meet J Street, the highest point of the District. This change in elevation is seen most clearly on Fifth Street between J and K Streets.

The raised streets define the district in that they distinguish it from its surrounding areas, outline where property owners might have raised their buildings, and help identify the presence of hollow sidewalks. The streets are bounded by below-grade, brick retaining walls constructed by 19<sup>th</sup>-century property owners. The original street grade remains buried beneath roughly 10 feet of fill, which was then covered with various 19<sup>th</sup>-century paving materials, including Nicolson paving and cobblestones. Today, raised streets between Second Street to the west, 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the east, I Street to the north and L Street to the south are paved with asphalt and many possess light-rail tracks. Within the RSHS District, a section of historic cobblestone paving remains intact beneath the existing asphalt paving (near Seventh and H Streets) as recorded by Tremaine & Associates in 2008. Within Old Sacramento Historic District, the raised section of Front Street, running north to south between J and L Streets, is paved with cobblestones. This paving is not historic, but rather a historic recreation of nineteenth-century paving implemented in the 1970s during the redevelopment of Old Sacramento. The west side of this section of Front Street is paved with asphalt. Dirt and gravel, as well as railroad tracks set in cement, characterize Front Street from the foot of J Street extending northward to the foot of I Street. Crosswalks at the J and Front Street intersection, as well as those at K and L Streets,

are composed of granite and cobblestone. Granite curbing dating from the time of the street improvements remains within the RSHS District, most notably on the west and east side of Ninth between I and J Streets, and well as the south side of I Street between Eighth & 10<sup>th</sup> Streets. This historic curbing is six inches wide, and typically four inches high from gutters which are roughly 2-5 feet wide. Throughout the downtown portion of the RSHS District, sidewalks are between 20 and 30 feet wide. Curbs and gutters within Old Sacramento are different in size than those throughout the rest of the RSHS District. On Front Street between J and L, and on I, J, K and L Streets between Front and Second Streets, gutters are cobbled to represent historic paving methods and are four feet wide. Sidewalk height within Old Sacramento ranges from six and one-half inches to two feet, creating “rolling sidewalks” that denote the various elevations to which 19<sup>th</sup>-century property owners raised their boardwalks. Old Sacramento sidewalks are roughly 14 feet wide and planked. Streets within the RSHS District vary in width and are characterized by two to four driving lanes, bike lanes and parking spaces. Parking spaces are seven feet wide, and bike lanes are three feet wide. Lanes are between 10 and 17 feet wide, depending on the street. As such, street widths range from 30 to 70 feet wide.

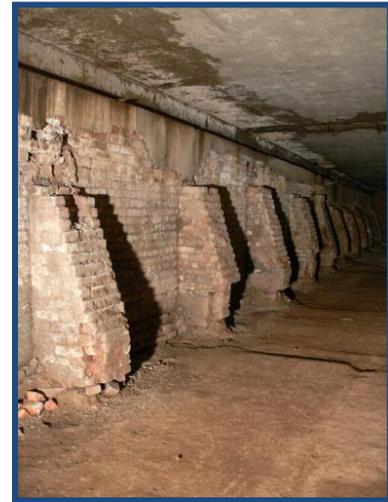


A “rolling sidewalk” in Old Sacramento Historic District. South side of J Street between Front and Second Streets.

During the street-raising project, workers left alleyways at their original elevations, but filled them up at the ends to meet the new, higher street grade, thereby creating the District’s unique “dipping alleyways.” Dipping alleyways (bisecting certain city blocks and extending east-west throughout downtown and north-south as well as east-west in Old Sacramento Historic District) as well as a number of parking lots, parking garages, and stores located below the current street level remind us of the city’s original elevation and help to provide a sense of the modified landscape. A sub-grade parking lot is located on the southeast corner of L and Front Streets at 1121 Front Street. Dipping alleyways may contain “disappearing windows,” or bricked-in windows at the original first story of buildings. These nineteenth-century entryways

were cut off where workers brought the alleyway up to meet the new street grade. The I/J Street and K/L Street alleys dip to their original street grades at Eighth and Ninth Streets, providing a dramatic example of the discrepancy between the old and new elevations of the streets.

During the street-raising project, property owners throughout the RSHS area inadvertently created hollow sidewalk segments when they topped off the space between their newly-filled street and their building. Hollow sidewalk segments are formed by six structural elements: the street retaining wall, the brick building wall, two end walls (constructed to denote property lines and keep unwelcome intruders out of buildings), the ceiling, and the floor. Building walls in the hollow sidewalks often feature barrel or lintel vaults. These vaults support those buildings whose owners decided to raise them to the new, higher street grade. In those cases where building owners chose not to raise them to the new street level, hollow sidewalks may showcase original storefronts. Other features of a hollow sidewalk segment may include: building entrance thresholds; granite stairs; and, on the surface level, cast-iron grids with quartz lights embedded into sidewalks, elevator doors, starred manhole covers and/or granite curbs.



A hollow sidewalk segment under the B.F. Hastings Building in Old Sacramento on J & Second Streets. Photographed by Rebecca Crowther.

Redevelopment efforts in downtown Sacramento in the 1970s, including the construction of Interstate 5 between Second and Third Streets, as well as the construction of Westfield Downtown Plaza in 1998 amid Third, J, Seventh and L Streets, resulted in the demolition and infill of many segments of the hollow sidewalks. Page & Turnbull surveyed the area and documented a number of accessible segments, and other segments are known to exist. Of those surveyed by Page & Turnbull, forty hollow sidewalk segments contain brick buttressed street retaining walls. At 1000 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, the retaining wall stands on raised, corbelled bases and at 715 Merchant Street the brick street retaining walls feature corbelled

piers. Seven of those hollow sidewalk segments surveyed feature brick support walls under the building, while 37 original facades were recorded. Approximately half of those original storefronts featured doors and window openings. Some, such as those at 111-113 K Street, were filled in with brick. Hollow sidewalk segments had one of two types of ceiling systems: a wood post and beam system or a brick barrel vault system. Only one hollow sidewalk segment surveyed featured the brick barrel vault system: 831 K Street. Nearly all segments featured end walls of brick, concrete block, or poured concrete.

Some hollow sidewalk segments possessed other features not related to their structural make-up, but instead provide evidence of how they were utilized after the high-grade construction ended. In some hollow sidewalks located at the corner of blocks, cylindrical, brick waters tanks (which likely held water in case of fire) exist. Two corner properties, 1125 Ninth Street and 729-731 J Street, feature these tanks. Cast-iron and quartz skylight, embedded into the new sidewalks, metal elevator doors, and starred manholes are all featured within the RSHS area as components of various hollow sidewalk segments. Examples of skylights are located in the hollow sidewalk segments at 927-931 J Street, 801 K Street, and 1015 Seventh Street. Metal elevator doors, installed into the surface of the sidewalk, provided access to the hollow sidewalks as storage for goods. The properties at 924 and 1005 12<sup>th</sup> Street retain evidence of their elevator access points. Starred manhole covers were likely installed as access points for water and sewer systems and are present at 910 J Street, 801 K Street, 1030 J Street and 923 Seventh Street. Finally, certain hollow sidewalk segments feature granite curbing, most likely installed during the street raising project when granite was being hauled into the business district on the Sacramento Valley Railroad from Folsom and Rocklin. Examples of granite curbs are found at the southeast corners of Ninth and J Street and Seventh and J Streets.

### **Other “Raised” Cities**

Sacramento possesses the unique historical identity of being the only city in California to raise its streets. While it is not the only city in the United States to have done so, Sacramento was one of the first. In addition to those places highlighted below, East St. Louis, Illinois;

Ellinwood, and Leavenworth, Kansas; and Eureka Springs, Arizona have each raised streets on a small scale.<sup>93</sup>

- Chicago, Illinois

Chicago's street-raising project began in the mid-1850s in response to poor drainage and muddy streets. Chicago's city council adopted a new, underground sewer system designed by Ellis S. Chesbrough – an engineer from Boston – to mitigate the problems. To make space for the new system, workers raised and graded city streets, using mud from the Chicago River bed as fill. The city set the new grade between four and fourteen feet above their original level, ensuring adequate drainage. As was the case in Sacramento, the local government managed the project while property owners took responsibility for raising their structures. George Pullman, made famous by his Pullman sleeping car, first gained notoriety as a house-raiser in Chicago. His workers used screw jacks to hoist buildings to the new street level.<sup>94</sup> It took Chicago roughly twenty years to finish these improvements, coming to completion in the mid-1870s.

- Seattle, Washington

Located on a natural harbor, Seattle coped with seasonal flooding from melted snow in the Cascade Mountains since its founding in the 1850s. Furthermore, shoreline deterioration caused by tidal flows contributed to Seattle's flooding problem. Although support for a street-raising project began to take shape in 1876, it was not until after the Seattle Fire of 1889 that the project got underway. The fire destroyed 64 acres of the central business district, presenting citizens with the opportunity to rebuild at a new, higher elevation. The city managed the project and mandated that new structures be built with disaster-proof materials like brick or steel. Workers re-graded, widened and raised streets by 10 to 30 feet. Even still, the city's failure to require the property owners rebuild at the new street level resulted in many owners rebuilding at the original level. These structures sat below the street level while wooden sidewalks extended from the newly-raised streets to the second or third stories of these buildings. By the

---

<sup>93</sup> Page and Turnbull, *Raised Streets & Hollow Sidewalks Survey Report*: July 2009.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

late 1890s, workers and property owners had rebuilt much of Seattle's business district.<sup>95</sup>

- Atlanta, Georgia

In 1836 the state of Georgia chartered a railroad to transport agricultural goods. Extending 138 miles from Chattanooga, Tennessee, the line came to an end at what would become Atlanta. After Georgia seceded from the Union in 1861, Atlanta emerged as the supply depot for the Confederacy during the Civil War. The railroad continued to fuel Atlanta's economy throughout the late nineteenth century, even after electric streetcar services were introduced in the city in 1889. To foster its relationship with the railroad, the city adopted plans to construct a new, raised public plaza in place of iron bridges located above the railroad tracks. Beginning in 1920, workers raised city streets above the tracks to mitigate traffic problems. Those buildings close to the newly-raised streets were not raised as in other cities. Instead, merchants and owners moved their operations to the second or third stories, preserving their original storefronts and first floors for storage.

### **Eligibility**

The Sacramento RSHS District is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the State level of significance in the areas of Social History, Politics and Government, and Commerce for its association with the efforts of Sacramento's business leaders to deal with flooding in the 1860s so as to maintain a viable business district and create an environment that would support the presence of the state capital. While other cities have been raised, Sacramento was among the earliest to do so, and no other city adopted the project for the same reasons as Sacramento. Located between Front and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets and H and L Streets, the District conveys its significance as a historical vernacular landscape altered by human efforts which can be read most easily in the raised streets, dipping alleyways, and hollow sidewalk segments. These character-defining features work together to convey the districts integrity of location, setting, feeling and association. The District and its raised streets, dipping alleyways,

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

and hollow sidewalk segments exist in their original location in Sacramento's business district at the confluence of the Sacramento and American River, thereby maintaining the District's integrity of location and setting. Furthermore, the District maintains historic integrity of feeling and association because the landscape created by the street-raising project remains, allowing visitors to the District to experience the changes in elevation that make the area unique, and reminding them of the street-raising project as well as business and political activities that occurred there in the 1860s.

The RSHS District is eligible at the State level under Criterion C in the area of design and construction. The street-raising project was a massive engineering project that completely re-defined the landscape in the business district. Today, those architectural features that define the District and many of the features associated with the hollow sidewalk segments remain, and are able to convey how property owners and construction crews physically raised the District in the 1860s. Similar technology as that used by Sacramentans to raise their business district was employed in other "raised cities." However, Sacramento was one of the earliest American cities to adopt such an engineering project, and therefore contributed to the development of the design and technique. The District still reflects early Sacramentans' original design for the District as a flood-control measure, thereby maintaining integrity of design. Furthermore, the District possesses enough raised streets, dipping alleyways and hollow sidewalks to demonstrate how workers completed the task.

The RSHS District is eligible at the State level under Criterion D for its potential to yield information about 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular design and construction of retaining walls and bulkheads to raise the street, on average, nine and one-half feet above the grade, yet retain hollow sidewalk spaces. Enough of the District's hollow sidewalk segments remain in their original locations with evidence of their original design and function still intact. The existing architectural features in the District are associated with the street-raising project and are crucial to fully understanding the District's historic significance as a flood-control measure. The District maintains integrity of materials and workmanship because the raised streets, dipping alleyways, and hollow sidewalk segments work together to convey how workers hoisted the district above high-water, and how it has stayed elevated for the past 150 years. Many of the

hollow sidewalk segments feature the original brick, wood and metal that stabilized the District's infrastructure beginning in the 1860s.

## Preservation Goals & Priorities

The intent of this historic context statement and accompanying survey documents is to provide a framework by which to understand the unique landscape that characterizes downtown Sacramento. Additionally, it identifies significant character-defining features within that historic district.

Despite early Sacramentans' best efforts, the established geographic area remains a flood zone and many of the character-defining features (hollow sidewalk segments) are rapidly disappearing. As such, general recommendations for planning and preservation include:

- Incorporating these findings into future design, planning or development guidelines for new projects that could impact these resources
- Protecting this significant cultural landscape by:
  - Promoting economic development and investment in the historic resource
  - Increase public awareness
    - (Old Sacramento Underground Tours, sponsored by the Historic Old Sacramento Foundation, currently offer tours of some of these remaining resources)
  - Using the economic benefits of such programming as tools for economic development and stimulants for local investment
  - Developing protection protocols, techniques and incentives
  - Developing a basis for stabilization, rehabilitation or reconstruction methods
  - Developing feasible new uses
  - Developing funding option to support preservation
  - Informing property owners how best to preserve and rehabilitate the resources
  - Adding the district and its character-defining features to the City of Sacramento's GIS database

## Bibliography

"A Great Calamity." *Union*, December 11, 1861.

Avella, Steven. *Sacramento: Indomitable City*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003.

Brewer, William H. *Up and Down California in 1860-1864: The Journal of William H. Brewer*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.

Brienes, Marvin. "Sacramento Defies the Rivers, 1870-1878." *California History* 58, no. 1 (1979): 3-19.

Capital Mall-East End Project, *A Capital Neighborhood: The Archeology of the Capitol Area East End Complex*. Sacramento: A Report Prepared for the Department of General Services, 2003.

Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection: Caroline Wenzel Notebooks, Volume 29, Page 19.

Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection: Caroline Wenzel Notebooks, Volume 29, Page 32. "Nicholson." *Sacramento Bee*, May 25, 1866.

Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection: Caroline Wenzel Notebooks, Volume 30 Page 41.

"Christmas Eve." *Union*, December 24, 1861.

*City Charter and Ordinances of the City of Sacramento*, compiled by Daniel J. Thomas. Sacramento: Water Fount and Home Journal, Print, 1856. Center for Sacramento History: City Clerk Collection 80/44/28.

*City Council Minute Index*. Center for Sacramento History: 76/39/01.

"City Improvements." *Sacramento Bee*, October 3, 1865.

Cole, Nellie May Henderson. *Consolidation of Sacramento City and County Government 1858-1863*. Sacramento State College, Master's Thesis, 1858.

Colville, Samuel. *City Directory of Sacramento for the Year 1854-55*. San Francisco: Monson & Valentine, 1854. Center for Sacramento History: Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. W.W. Norton & Co., 1991.

Cutter, D.S. *Sacramento City Directory for the Year A.D. 1860*. Sacramento: H.S. Crocker & Co., Book and Job Printers, 1859. Center for Sacramento History: Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

"December 2<sup>nd</sup>." *Union*, January 1, 1867.

Eifler, Mark A. *Gold Rush Capitalists: Greed and Growth in Sacramento*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002.

----- "Taming the Wilderness Within: Order and Opportunity in Gold Rush Sacramento, 1849-1850. *California History* 79, no. 4 (Winter 2000/2001): 197-207.

Helmich, Mary and Pauline G. Spear. *A Gold Rush Merchant's Manual*. Office of Interpretive Services: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1989.

Helmich, Stephen G. "K Street Landing, Old Sacramento and the Embarcadero." *Golden Notes* 26, no. 3 (Fall 1980): 1-17.

Henry, Fern. *My Checkered Life: Luzena Stanley Wilson in Early California*. Nevada City: Carl Mautz Publishing, 2003.

"High Grade." *Union*, February 13, 1863.

Historic Environment Consultants. *Underground Sacramento Historic Resources*, July 2009.

Holden, William M. *Sacramento: Excursions into its History and Natural World*. Sacramento: Two Rivers Publishing Company, 1987.

Holliday, J.S. *Rush for Riches: Gold Fever and the Making of California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

"Important About the High Grade." *Sacramento Bee*, June 18, 1866.

"Improvements in Buildings." *Union*, January 1, 1867.

"In the Mud." *Sacramento Bee*, February 12, 1869.

Itogawa, Eugene. "New Channels for the American River." *Golden Notes* 17, no. 3 (October 1971): 1-13.

Lagomarsino, Barbara. *Early Attempts to Save the Site of Sacramento by Raising Its Business District*. Sacramento State College: Master's Thesis, 1969.

"Letter from Sacramento." *The Elevator*, October 27, 1867.

Limerick, Patricia Nelson. *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1987.

McGowan, Joseph. *A History of the Sacramento Valley*, Vol. 1. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1961.

McGowan, Joseph A. and Terry Willis. *Sacramento: Heart of the Golden State*. Woodland Hills: Windsor Publishing, Inc., 1983.

"Meeting of Property Owners." *Union*, March 18, 1862.

Murphy, John J. *The Sacramento Directory for the Years 1861 and 1862*. Sacramento: H.S. Crocker & Co., 1861. Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

"Must Note Move!" *Sacramento Bee*, March 16, 1867.

"New Jersey Had Better Luck with Hoboken than California." *Union*, July 13, 1957.

O'Neill, Karen M. *Rivers by Design: State Power and the Origins of U.S. Flood Control*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

"Ordinance Number 124: 'Fixing the Grade of the Streets.'" *Board of Supervisor Minutes*, January 8, 1862. Center for Sacramento History: Book F, 542-545.

Page and Turnbull. *Raised Streets and Hollow Sidewalks Survey Report, Sacramento California*. July 2009.

*Reports on the Board of State Capitol Commissioner and Miscellaneous Papers, 1850-1892.*  
Sacramento: California State Library, 1893-1899.

*Sacramento Bee.* October 27, 1866.

*Sacramento Jail Register.* July 1869, page 168. Center for Sacramento History.

Severson, Thor. *Sacramento: An Illustrated History: 1839-1874 From Sutter's Fort to Capital City.* California Historical Society, 1973.

"Smash Up." *Sacramento Bee*, October 12, 1865.

Taylor, Bayard. *Eldorado: Adventures in the Path of Empire.* Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2000.

Taylor, W. Leonard and Robert W. Taylor, "The Great California Flood of 1862," The Fortnightly Club, [www.redlandsfortnightly.org/papers/Taylor06.htm](http://www.redlandsfortnightly.org/papers/Taylor06.htm).

Thompson and West. *A History of Sacramento County.* Berkeley: Howell-North, 1960.

Thrall, Stephen Chapman. *The Flood of 1862: Its Meanings and Lessons.* San Francisco: Towne & Bacon Book, Card and Fancy Job Printers, 1862.

Tremaine & Associates, Inc. *Rediscovering A Legacy: Archaeological Monitoring Report for the Sacramento Regional Transit District Light Rail Extension Project.* Prepared for Sacramento Regional Transit District, October 2008.

Uhlhorn, John F. *The Sacramento Directory for the Year 1875.* Sacramento: H.S. Crocker & Co., 1875. Center for Sacramento History, Eleanor McClatchy Collection.

U.S. Department of the Interior. *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,* Revised 1995.

Woodward, Lucinda. *A Documentary History of California's State Capitol.* Sacramento: California State Capitol Restoration Project, 1981.