

2.2.20 Merchant Street Historic District



Ordinance # 85-076
July 30, 1985
Updated by Ordinance # 2019-052
December 10, 2019

Updated 2020

SACRAMENTO REGISTER OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Merchant Street Historic District

The Merchant Street Historic District preserves a portion of Sacramento's central business district, which centered around J and K streets as early as the 1840s. The district is named for Merchant Street, the narrow alley between J, K, 7th, and 8th streets around which many of Sacramento's most prominent commercial and civic buildings were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most notably, the stretch of 7th Street between J and K streets became an epicenter for banking, where monumental banking halls lined the street.

J and K streets were the principal threads along which Sacramento developed as its population grew after the outbreak of the California Gold Rush in 1848, the same year the city's grid was laid out. K Street sat at the foot of the levee where passengers disembarked from riverboats on the Sacramento River and became the center of California's stagecoach network, while J Street was the primary route to the gold fields to the east. Discerning entrepreneurs set up businesses along these routes, recognizing the profit they could make selling goods to gold seekers who were heading east in droves.

The peak period of development around 7th, J, and K streets coincided with the popularity of streetcar service in Sacramento, which peaked in the 1920s. Built up during the era of pedestrian and streetcar travel, the blocks were ill-suited for the transition to automobile traffic as almost none of the businesses had parking lots or parking garages. As automobile ownership accelerated after World War II and commercial businesses began to relocate to new suburbs outside the city center, the demand for public transportation declined. Regular passenger service on the Northern Electric interurban railroad and riverboat service to San Francisco ended in 1940. By 1947, all streetcar service in the city had also ceased.

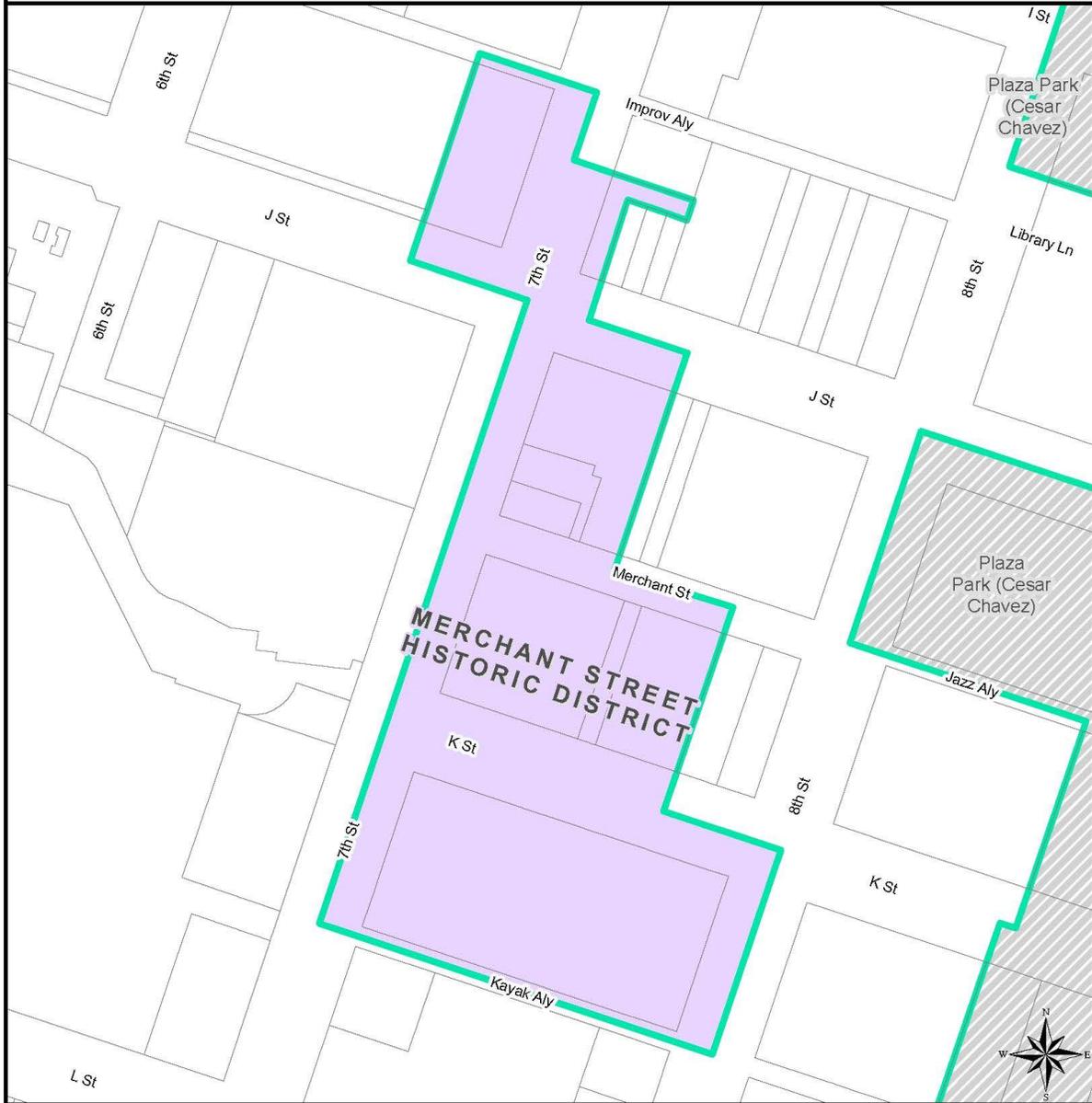
The period of significance for the Merchant Street Historic District begins in 1868, when efforts to raise the street levels to protect the city from floods introduced stability that encouraged new development on J and K streets, and ends in 1948, when demolition of the U.S. Post Office building on K and 7th streets began and the commercial building at 726 K Street was remodeled into its current configuration.

Architectural Styles: Italianate, Queen Anne, Neoclassical, Beaux Arts, Italian Renaissance, Art Deco, Vernacular, Commercial Styles: (Two-Part Commercial Block, Enframed Window Wall, Three-Part Vertical Block, Temple Front, Vault)

Ordinance # 85-076
July 30, 1985
Updated by Ordinance # 2019-052
December 10, 2019

Updated 2020

City of Sacramento Historic Resources



Geographic Information System

Merchant Street Historic District

Ordinance # 85-076 July 30th, 1985

Boundaries Revised: Ordinance # 2019-0052 December 10th, 2019

0 25 50 75 100
Feet

- Parcel
- Merchant Street
- Other Historic District

SACRAMENTO REGISTER OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Contributing (C) and Non-Contributing (NC) Resources

Address	Parcel Number	Historic Status
1007 7TH ST	006-0094-003	Contributing
1013 7TH ST	006-0094-002	Contributing
1015 7TH ST	006-0094-001	Contributing
629 J ST	006-0032-012	Contributing
0 K ST	006-0096-021	Non-Contributing
705 K ST	006-0096-020	Non-Contributing
717 K ST	006-0096-022	Contributing
700-732 K ST	006-0380-001	Contributing

Note: Addresses of properties may not be all the addresses associated with the property; address shown reflect the address assigned to the parcel by the Sacramento County Recorder's Office.