



Fremont Park

Historic District Plan

Physical Description & Boundaries

The Fremont Park Historic District is situated in the southeastern section of Sacramento's 1848 street grid and features one of the city's original one-block plazas, John C. Fremont Park. The district is situated along Q Street and confined by 15th Street to the west, P Street to the north, 16th Street to the east, and the Sacramento Regional Transit light rail line along Quill Alley to the south.

The district is comprised of a concentrated group of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century houses that are arranged on the half block south of Q Street, directly across from Fremont Park.



Figure 152. Houses face Fremont Park on Q Street between 15th and 16th streets.



Figure 153. A view of Fremont Park, looking northwest.



Figure 154. Converted multi-unit houses with a mixture of Craftsman and Prairie styles on 16th Street.



Figure 155. The infill development and the tracks of the Sacramento Regional Transit light rail form the district's south boundary.

Brief Historic Context

The Fremont Park Historic District preserves a single block of predominately late Victorian-era homes situated on Q Street between 15th and 16th streets. The residences were constructed at the crossroads of two early streetcar routes, the P Street line and 15th Street extension of the K Street line. The district is consistent with the development of Midtown at the turn of the twentieth century as wealthy and middle-class residents began to move out of Sacramento's crowded West End.¹ Despite the area's current mixed-use environs, this section of Q Street was historically a contiguous residential area of primarily single-family homes.

The core buildings of the Fremont Park Historic District were constructed over a 35-year period, between 1880 and 1915.² For much of the second half of the nineteenth century, the area in question was situated at the southeastern edge of the city, bounded by largely undeveloped land to the east and the R Street railroad levee to the south. An 1870-perspective view of Sacramento depicts the sporadic pattern of residential development east of 15th Street.³ By 1895, the same sector was a dense residential neighborhood and the present buildings at 1500, 1504, 1508, 1512, and 1522 Q Street and 1714 16th Street had been erected.⁴



Figure 156. The Old Enos Grocery store at 1500 Q Street (1951). Source: Center for Sacramento History, Eugene Hepting Collection, 1985/024/5020.

The growth of Midtown and the East End (the stretch of land positioned east of the Capitol grounds) was spurred by the establishment of horse-drawn streetcar lines along K, 20th, and O streets during the 1870s.⁵ The completion of the P Street line in 1892 allowed for more efficient access to Fremont Park area.⁶ During the 1890s, the neighborhood's proximity to the plaza and the streetcar line was highlighted in newspaper real estate advertisements.⁷

The first residents of Fremont Park were upper and middle-class individuals from diverse backgrounds. One of these individuals was Manuel I. Enos, an immigrant from the Azores who opened the Enos

Grocery Store at 1500 Q Street in 1894.⁸ The store served as the commercial anchor of the surrounding neighborhood and as a convenient stop for streetcar passengers and travelers leaving town.⁹ The property remained in the Enos family until 1994.¹⁰

Another appealing amenity of the neighborhood was John C. Fremont Park, named for well-known Western explorer John C. Fremont. The park, one of the original plazas donated to the city by John Sutter, Jr. in 1848, remained undeveloped prior to 1900.¹¹ The area's new inhabitants compelled municipal officials to make improvements to the space. In 1913, local philanthropist Cornelia E. Fratt, who resided at 1511 P Street, gave \$2,500 to the city to build a comfort station and band stand on the site.¹²

Throughout the twentieth century, transportation continued to play an important role in shaping the physical context of the area. In 1907, the Western Pacific Railroad opened a new railroad line on the Q/R Alley (Quill Alley), half a block north of the Southern Pacific's tracks on R Street.¹³ Meanwhile, the increasing popularity of automobiles over streetcars resulted in significant changes to the blocks adjacent to the park, a transformation that accentuates the present-day boundaries of the district. Maps

1 Nathan Hallam, "We Must Give the World Confidence in the Stability and Permanence of the Place: Planning Sacramento's Townsite, 1853-1870," in *River City and Valley Life: An Environmental History of the Sacramento Region*, ed. Christopher J. Castaneda and Lee M.A. Simpson (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 63-64.

2 Sanborn Map Company, Sacramento, California [map], 1915.

3 Fire Department of the City of Sacramento, *A Birds-eye view of Sacramento Capitol of the State of California* [map], 30 1/4 inches x 35 inches, 1857, "California History Section, Picture Catalog," California State Library, http://catalog.library.ca.gov/F/NETX6MY4UVD6PJF2TY7CDCRV7LN7F78AGKTFNFKMKR229GYXJ5-37463?func=full-set-set&set_number=001266&set_entry=000001&format=999.

4 Sanborn-Perris Map Company, *Sacramento, California* [map], 1895.

5 William Burg, *Midtown Sacramento: Creative Soul of the City*, (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014), 36.

6 "Running on P Street," *Sacramento Daily Union*, April 16, 1892, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=SDU18920416.2.71&srpos=1&e=-1880--1892--en--20-SDU%2cST%2cSU-1--txt-txIN-%22p+street%22+car-----1>.

7 "For Sale," *Sacramento Daily Union*, April 12, 1893, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=SDU18930412.2.83.3&srpos=6&e=-----en--20-1--txt-txIN-%221522+Q+Street%22+Sacramento-----1>.

8 Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center and the Historic Old Sacramento Foundation, *Sacramento's Midtown* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006), 89.

9 Sacramento Branch of the American Association of University Women, *Vanishing Victorians: A Guide to the Historic Homes of Sacramento* (Sacramento: Fong & Fong Printers and Lithographers, 1973), 69.

10 Ibid.

11 Sanborn-Perris Map Company, 1895.

12 "Public Comfort Station Dedicated: Mrs. Fratt Makes Magnificent Gift to City," *Sacramento Union*, August 4, 1913, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=SU19130804.2.19&srpos=2&e=-----en--20-1--txt-txIN-%22Fremont+Park%22+Fratt-----1>.

13 Page & Turnbull, 8.4.

published by the Sanborn Map Company between 1915 and 1952 document the gradual replacement of residences along 15th and 16th streets with automobile repair shops and car garages, including several in establishments within the area that have since been demolished.¹⁴

Many streets in Midtown were converted into high speed, one-way channels leading to newly-constructed transcontinental highways.¹⁵ The Lincoln Highway was routed in 1913 and cut through downtown Sacramento via 15th Street and later 16th Street.¹⁶ To this day, 15th and 16th streets remain Midtown's primary arteries between U.S. Route 40 and Interstate 80. Just as the streetcars prompted residents to move out of the West End during the late nineteenth century, the highways allowed the wealthy to move farther into the suburbs during the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁷ By the 1950s many of the large single-family residences within the district were converted into flats and apartments to accommodate residents displaced by redevelopment projects.¹⁸

In the twenty-first century, the Fremont Park Historic District and the surrounding neighborhood incorporate a mix of uses. In the place of single-family homes and transportation-related businesses outside of the district, large apartment buildings have been constructed on the west, north, and east borders of the park; the railroad tracks on the Q/R Alley have been converted for use by the Sacramento Regional

Transit light rail. Within the district, many of the buildings serve as multi-unit residences. The former Enos Grocery Store remains commercial in use and currently houses a coffee shop.

¹⁴ Sanborn Map Company, *Sacramento, California* [map], 1915-1952.

¹⁵ Burg, *Midtown Sacramento: Creative Soul of the City*, 36.

¹⁶ "Official Map of the Lincoln Highway," The Lincoln Highway Association, accessed August 8, 2018. <https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/map/>.

¹⁷ Burg, *Midtown Sacramento: Creative Soul of the City*, 30.

¹⁸ Sanborn Map Company, 1915-1952.

Significance

The Fremont Park Historic District was designated for listing on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources by the City Preservation Commission in 1985 in Ordinance #85-076.

The following table provides a current evaluation of significance under the requirements and considers the factors based on the above historic district context and the 2018 historic district survey. Additionally, this historic district relates to the Railroad Context Statement of the city’s General Plan Technical Background Report.

(B) Listing on the Sacramento Register – Historic districts	
(1) Requirements	
(a)	The Fremont Park Historic District meets requirement (a) for listing on the Sacramento Register, because it is a geographically definable area.
(b)(i)	<p>The Fremont Park Historic District meets requirement (b)(i) for listing on the Sacramento Register as an area that possesses “a significant concentration or continuity of buildings unified by: (A) past events or (B) aesthetically by plan or physical development.”</p> <p>The Fremont Park Historic District preserves a one-block assemblage of large late nineteenth and early twentieth-century houses across from Fremont Park. The predominate architectural style of the district is Queen Anne.¹⁹ The buildings share a similar massing, raised entrances, and prominent front-facing gables that unify them as a group. In addition, the district features a Craftsman-style apartment building on the corner of Q and 16th streets and a large Italianate residence that was moved to its present location at 1526 Q Street in 1901.²⁰ The landscape also adds to the visual cohesion of the district. Each of the buildings on Q Street share a similar setback with grassy front lawns and planted parking strips. Across the street, a row of mature palms line the southern perimeter of Fremont Park.</p>
(b)(ii)	<p>The Fremont Park Historic District meets requirement (b)(ii) for listing on the Sacramento Register as an area “associated with an event, person, or period significant or important to city history.”</p> <p>The Fremont Park Historic District is associated with the settlement of Sacramento’s Midtown and East End at the end of the nineteenth century. The creation of extensive streetcar networks allowed for wealthy and middle-class residents to move east and south from the city’s overcrowded and crime-ridden West End. This development is closely linked with the national trajectory of individuals and families migrating out of urban areas in search of newer residential neighborhoods over the course of the following decades.</p>
(c)	The Fremont Park Historic District meets requirement (c) for listing on the Sacramento Register as it aligns with the goals and purposes of historic preservation in Sacramento, as well as the city’s other goals and policies. Per the Sacramento City Code, the preservation of the district enhances the “city’s economic, cultural and aesthetic standing, its identity and its livability, marketability, and urban character.”

¹⁹ “2.2.19 Fremont Park Historic District,” (Ordinance #85-076, Sacramento Community Development Department, July 30, 1985, updated May 2014), 2.
²⁰ Ibid.

Period of Significance: 1880-1925

The period of significance for the Fremont Park Historic District begins with the construction of the earliest surviving house in the district in 1880 and ends with the construction of the last building in the district in 1925.

Property Types from the Period of Significance

- Residential
- Commercial
- Landscape

Architectural Styles from the Period of Significance

- Italianate
- Queen Anne
- Craftsman
- Colonial Revival
- Classic Box
- Prairie

(B) Listing on the Sacramento Register – Historic districts	
(2) Factors to be considered	
(a)	Factor (2)(a) states that “a historic district should have integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship and association.” The Fremont Park Historic District retains sufficient integrity to meet this factor for consideration as a historic district.
(b)	Factor (2)(b) states that “the collective historic value of the buildings and structures in a historic district taken together may be greater than the historic value of each individual building or structure.” The Fremont Park Historic District meets this factor because its buildings and structures represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose collective historic value is greater when taken as a whole.

Character-Defining Features

Element	Character of Historic District
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historically single-family residences, some converted into multi-family units, interspersed with a few mixed-use residential and commercial buildings Parking and auxiliary uses located along alleys
Mass & Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cohesive block of vertically-oriented buildings Predominately two-story houses with Delta-style high basements and raised first story
Cladding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominately wood siding, typically three or four lap, channel rustic, or shingle siding
Roofs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prominent front-facing gabled roofs Flat, cross-gabled, and hipped roofs in a variety of pitches
Entries & Doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delta-style configuration with staircases leading to primary entrances above a high basement
Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood-frame, double-hung windows Front- and side-facing bay windows
Porches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prominent full- or half-width porches accessed by a staircase
Ornamentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italianate and Queen Anne details, including incised brackets under roof eaves, rounded windows, and patterned shingles on gabled ends Classical Revival details, including Ionic columns and dentils along cornice Prairie details, including wide overhanging eaves, tapered square and paired square columns, horizontal massing, and brick chimneys and porches
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large fir and deciduous trees throughout Fremont Park and palms lining sections of the park perimeter
Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Axial pathways intersecting at the fountain at the center of Fremont Park 14 historic lights in Fremont Park Rows of mature, evenly spaced, deciduous street trees—most often palms—planted in a parking strip Evidence of removed hitching posts along Q Street in the form of L-shaped concrete strips next to street curb Unobstructed views of Q Street and Fremont Park

Boundaries & Location

The following map shows the boundaries and location of the Fremont Park Historic District.

To view the statuses of individual properties as contributing or non-contributing resources to the historic district, refer to the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources.



Figure 157. Map of the Fremont Park Historic District. Source: City of Sacramento and Page & Turnbull, 2019.

District-Specific Standards & Criteria

Design Principle

Projects in the Fremont Park Historic District must minimize further impacts on the integrity of contributing properties in the district and sympathetically integrate the historic district with the transportation-related development on Quill Alley, commercial development on 16th Street, and orientation of buildings toward Fremont Park.

Rationale

The Fremont Park Historic District contains a grouping of historic single-family residences oriented to face Q Street and Fremont Park, many of which have been converted for commercial use. Many of the buildings have been physically altered, but in general, the character-defining features, including setback and landscaping, remain intact so that the character of the historic district is preserved.

In addition to the Standards & Criteria Common to Sacramento's Historic Districts in Section 1, the following district-specific standards and criteria apply when planning a project in the Fremont Park Historic District.

1. Rehabilitation of Contributing Resources

- 1.1 Protect carved, turned, or shaped wood treatments that are important features to the architectural style.
- 1.2 Maintain, preserve, and, where necessary, repair and restore historic elements associated with the predominate Delta style of residential architecture, especially historic staircases, porches, and doors.



Figure 158. Many of the contributing houses in the historic district feature decorative exterior woodwork that should be maintained and preserved.

2. Additions & Accessory Structures for Contributing Resources

- 2.1 Design additions with proportions that are compatible with the scale and massing of the main contributing building on the parcel
 - Narrow, vertical massing is appropriate on Q Street, while broader, horizontal massing is appropriate on 15th and 16th streets.
- 2.2 Avoid additions that cause a contributing building's height to exceed 150% of its historic height.
 - Use step backs to maintain the existing street façade height.
- 2.3 Design secondary dwelling units to include windows and entries facing Quill Alley to improve safety and visibility of the light rail station.

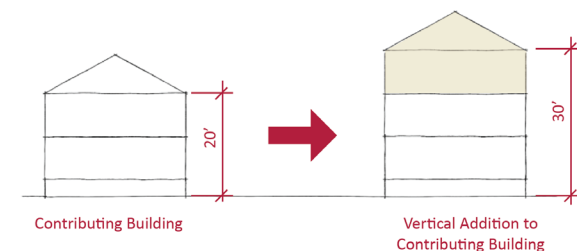


Figure 159. Additions should not cause a building's height to exceed 150% of its historic height.

3. New (Infill) Construction & Alterations to Non-Contributing Resources

- 3.1 Design new construction to be compatible with the scale and massing of adjacent contributing properties.
 - Vertically-massed buildings are recommended on Q Street. Horizontally-massed buildings are recommended on 15th and 16th streets.
- 3.2 Where additional height is considered, the height of new buildings should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.

- Consider using step backs for taller buildings to maintain the existing street façade height of adjacent contributing buildings.
- 3.3 Consider providing street-facing, covered front porches or entries at new infill development.

4. Site Features, Streetscape, & Landscaping

- 4.1 Preserve, maintain, and, where necessary, repair and restore historic plantings and landscaping features in Fremont Park, including axial pathways and historic lights.
- 4.2 Where street trees consist of a row of trees of the same species—such as palms—replace removed or diseased trees in kind with the same species or a compatible species at regular intervals in order to maintain the historic tree planting pattern.



Figure 160. Contributing buildings on Q Street are predominately vertically massed.

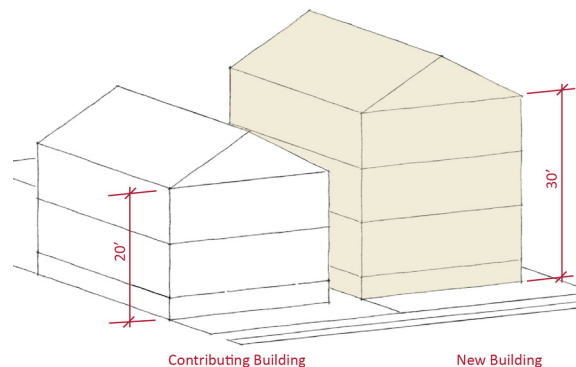


Figure 161. The height of new buildings should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.



Figure 162. A uniform setback between contributing buildings and the street contributes to the cohesive streetscape.

