



Marshall Park

Historic District Plan

Physical Description & Boundaries

The Marshall Park Historic District is located within Sacramento's original 1848 street grid and consists of historically residential properties situated around Marshall Park. The district is bounded by I, J, and 28th streets, which form the north, south, and east borders of Marshall Park, and extends roughly one block west of the park to 26th Street and half a block south to Jazz Alley.



Figure 164. Houses in a variety of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architectural styles line J Street to the west of Marshall Park. Many have been converted into commercial businesses.



Figure 165. View of Marshall Park, looking northwest.

Brief Historic Context

The Marshall Park Historic District preserves a small but cohesive grouping of houses that were constructed around Marshall Park in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The 2.5-acre park is named after James Marshall, whose discovery of gold at John Sutter's sawmill in Coloma kicked off the California Gold Rush in 1848.¹ The park—located on the block bounded by I, J, 27th, and 28th streets—is one of ten one-block plazas that John A. Sutter, Jr. donated to Sacramento for use as a public park when the young city was first laid out that same year. Located at the city's eastern periphery at the time of its establishment, the area around Marshall Park remained sparsely populated until the late nineteenth century when Sacramento's expanding population began to spill out into new streetcar suburbs that were emerging on the city's borders.²

The development of new neighborhoods to the east of Sacramento's central business district was aided by the extension of streetcar lines to these areas, which allowed residents to enjoy the benefits of living outside the increasingly overcrowded and dirty city center while offering them the means to travel to their places of work downtown.³ These new "streetcar suburbs" followed a wider national trend as the expansion of streetcar service spurred the

1 Thor Sevenson, *Sacramento, An Illustrated History: 1839-1874, From Sutter's Fort to Capital City* (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1973), 45-47.

2 Paul J. P. Sandul, "Both 'Country Town' and 'Bustling Metropolis': How Boosterism, Suburbs, and Narrative Helped Shape Sacramento's Identity and Environmental Sensibilities," 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), 172-173.

3 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.



Figure 166. Landscaping at Marshall Park (date unknown). Source: Parks and Buildings of Sacramento, Calif., BANC PIC 1905.05264-PIC. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

outward growth of cities across the country.⁴ By the start of the twentieth century, streetcars served the blocks surrounding Marshall Park on lines that ran down J and 28th streets.⁵ The Central Street Railway established a horse-drawn streetcar line that ran on these as part of its route from the Central Pacific Depot on 2nd and H streets to Oak Park in 1887. Electric

4 Linda Flint McClelland, *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2002, 18-20.

5 William Burg, "Sacramento's Streetcar Suburbs, Part 4: East Sacramento and Elmhurst," *Sacramento History* (blog), September 5, 2007, <http://sacramentohistory.blogspot.com/2007/09/sacramentos-streetcar-suburbs-part-4.html>.

streetcar service began in 1891.⁶ A resident explained the value of electric streetcars operating on J and 28th streets in a letter to the *Sacramento Daily Union* prior to the start of service: "Your home is convenient and made of greater value by the street cars being within a block of you," he wrote, "but it is enhanced in value much more by the cars going past your door."⁷

By 1895, Sanborn fire insurance maps show that development had begun on the blocks around Marshall Park. The one-story Marshall Primary School, built in 1878, occupied the southern half of the park, and three single-family houses with alley-facing outbuildings had been constructed on the block immediately to its east.⁸ In 1900, the city decided to return the land on which the school sat to its originally intended role as a public plaza, and the Marshall School relocated two blocks north to a new site at 28th and G streets.⁹ The new building, completed in 1903, continued to serve the families in the area, which became known as the Marshall School neighborhood.¹⁰

The neighborhood developed quickly at the start of the twentieth century. By 1915, all of the parcels

6 William Burg, "Sacramento's Streetcar Suburbs, Part 2: Central Street Railway," *Sacramento History* (blog), September 5, 2007, <http://sacramentohistory.blogspot.com/2007/08/sacramentos-streetcar-suburbs-part-2.html>; Kathleen Forrest and Genevieve Entezari, "Shiloh Baptist Church," (National Register of Historic Places Draft Registration Form, California Office of Historic Preservation, 2011).

7 "Horses, or Nothing. The Failure of Electric Cars in San Jose," *Sacramento Daily Union*, July 13, 1889, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=SDU18890713.2.22&srpos=28&e=-----en--20-SDU%2cST%2cSU-21--txt-txIN-%22j+street%22+streetcar-----1>.

8 Sanborn Map Company, Sacramento, California [map], vol. 1, 1895.

9 "36th Annual SOCA Home Tour, Marshall School Neighborhood," (brochure, Sacramento Old City Association, 2011).

10 Bill Lindelof, "Negotiations to begin over old Marshall school site in Midtown," *Sacramento Bee*, November 17, 2016. <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/education/article115429268.html>.

surrounding Marshall Park were filled with single-family dwellings. These wood-framed houses were constructed in a similar scale to one another, with 40-foot frontages and a generally uniform setback from the street. A few apartment buildings also dotted the neighborhood.¹¹

Over the subsequent decades, the advent of the automobile transformed the blocks around Marshall Park. Streetcars running on multiple lines and an increasing number of automobiles whizzed down J Street, which had become part of the state's growing highway system by 1923. An additional streetcar line had also been established nearby on H Street.¹²

The increasing popularity of the automobile led to the gradual end of streetcar service to Marshall Park and throughout much of Sacramento in the 1930s and 1940s. Service down 28th Street was replaced by an extension of the T Street bus line in 1936.¹³ The H Street streetcar line was gone by 1943.¹⁴ By the end of 1946, all streetcar service on J Street, one of the Sacramento's earliest and longest-running streetcar routes, had also ended.¹⁵

By the middle of the century, the formerly quiet neighborhood of single-family homes had transitioned into a densely-populated, mixed-use area. Nearly all of the turn-of-the-twentieth-century houses on the blocks next to the park were adapted into multi-family flats or apartments. Automobile garages replaced

outbuildings on the alleys, and apartment complexes and commercial businesses, including a rug cleaning establishment and paint shop, were built in the place of earlier houses.¹⁶

Mid-century city redevelopment projects also impacted the area. In 1961, the Sacramento Senior Citizens Center opened in the center of Marshall Park. The building remains in use as the Ethel MacLeod Hart Senior Center.¹⁷ In 1968, the Interstate 80 highway was completed one block east of the park, creating a boundary between the original city and newer neighborhoods to the east around which large-scale commercial development proliferated.

Marshall Park in the early decades of the twenty-first century includes the Hart Senior Center, a children's play area, horseshoe pit, and adult fitness stations.¹⁸ The surrounding blocks are characterized by some surviving turn-of-the-twentieth-century houses, which are bordered by more recent development, including restaurants, retail shops, infill housing, and professional offices.

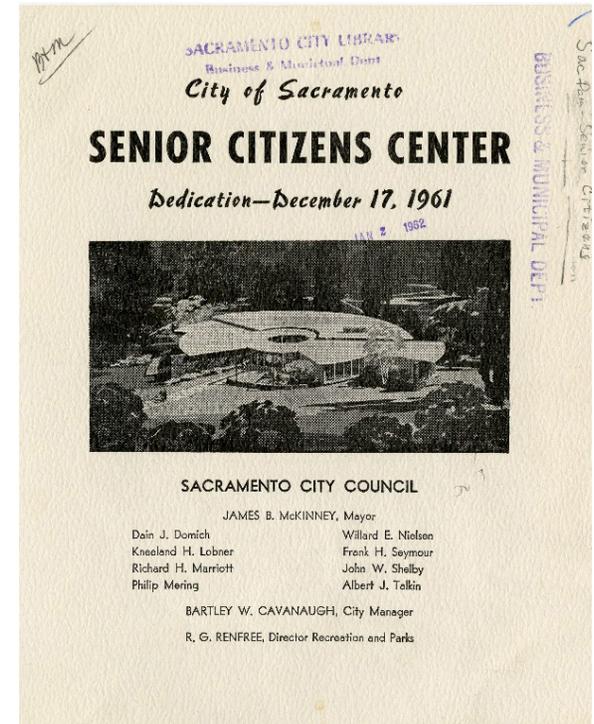


Figure 167. Memorabilia from the dedication of the City of Sacramento Senior Citizens Center in 1961, now the Ethel MacLeod Hart Senior Center (1961). Source: Sacramento Public Library, Sacramento Room.

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

12 Cyrus G. Brown Maps and Aero Views Commercial Artists, "Map of the City of Sacramento" [map] 1923.

13 William D. Bourne, "Sacramento: Part One - Utility to Authority," *Motor Coach Age* 62, no. 1 & 2, January – June 2011, 6.

14 *Ibid.*, 12.

15 *Ibid.*, 16.

16 Sanborn Map Company, Sacramento, California [map], vol. 2, 1915 – Dec. 1950.

17 "City of Sacramento Senior Citizens Center," (program, Sacramento Public Library, 1962), <http://cdm15248.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15248coll3/id/2163>.

18 "James Marshall Park," City of Sacramento, accessed September 4, 2018. <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/ParksandRec/Parks/Park-Directory/Central-City/Marshall-Park>.

Significance

The Marshall 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 Marshall Park Historic District meets requirement (a) for listing on the Sacramento Register, because it is a geographically definable area.
(b)(i)	<p>The Marshall 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 Marshall Park Historic District is comprised of a cohesive grouping of houses that were constructed as part of the development of the Marshall School neighborhood as a turn-of-the-century streetcar suburb. Although Marshall Park was one of the ten public squares that were platted out in Sacramento’s 1848 street grid, the surrounding area remained sparsely populated until the late nineteenth century, when streetcars began running to the area down J, H, and 28th streets. Like many streetcar suburbs across the country, the presence of public amenities, such as the Marshall Park and Marshall School, also attracted new residents to the area. The concentration of single-family houses in the area reflect the area’s development as a primarily middle-class neighborhood. The buildings exhibit a similar age, scale, and use of materials and display the range of architectural styles characteristic of the Marshall School neighborhood’s peak period of development from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century.</p>
(b)(ii)	<p>The Marshall 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 district is associated with the period of streetcar development in outlying areas of Sacramento’s original street grid that is significant to the city’s history of expansion. Like many cities across the country, overcrowded and dirty conditions in Sacramento’s oldest residential neighborhoods near the central business district encouraged residents to look for new neighborhoods in which to live. Access to streetcar service and modern amenities, such as public green space and schools, attracted residential development to areas on the city’s periphery, including the Marshall School neighborhood, which not only had a one-block public park at its center but was also serviced by streetcar lines on J, H, and 28th streets. As a result, the majority of the surviving residential buildings in the area date to the period when streetcars regularly traversed the neighborhood from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s.</p>

Period of Significance: 1887-1936

The period of significance for the Marshall Park Historic District begins with the start of streetcar service along J and 28th streets in 1887, which attracted new residential development to the area, and concludes with the end of streetcar service on 28th Street in 1936, which signaled the start of an exodus of many residents to newer automobile-oriented suburbs outside the city.

Property Types from the Period of Significance

- Recreational
- Residential

Architectural Styles from the Period of Significance

- Italianate
- Stick/Eastlake
- Queen Anne
- Classical Revival
- Colonial Revival
- Classic Box
- Tudor
- Italian Renaissance
- Mediterranean Revival
- Prairie
- Craftsman
- Vernacular
- Landscape

(B) Listing on the Sacramento Register – Historic districts	
(1) Requirements	
(c)	The Marshall 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.”
(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 Marshall 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 Marshall 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 or commercial businesses Parking and auxiliary uses located along alleys
Mass & Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominately two- to three-story single-family houses with Delta-style raised basements and raised first story Smaller number of three-story apartment buildings
Cladding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominately wood siding, typically wide and narrow width channel rustic siding, three- or four-lap siding, or shingles; occasional use of brick, stucco, or a combination of these materials
Roofs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predominately front-facing gabled or hipped roofs, often with a centrally placed dormer Brick or clinker brick chimneys
Entries & Doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delta-style configuration with staircase leading to primary entrance above a high basement Paneled wood doors, often with a transom above, side lites, or integrated glazing Wood or terrazzo stairs
Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood-frame double-hung, casement, paired, ribbon, and leaded glass windows Single and multi-story bay windows in semi-hexagonal, squared, and rounded forms
Porches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prominent full or half-width porches accessed by a staircase Brick or clinker brick porch or column bases

Element	Character of Historic District
Ornamentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Italianate, Queen Anne, and Eastlake details, including incised brackets under roof eaves; slender, turned porch posts and balusters and patterned shingles on gabled ends Classical Revival details, including Tuscan or modified Ionic columns and dentils along cornices Craftsman and Prairie details such as wide, overhanging eaves, exposed rafter and purlin tails, wood braces, tapered square columns, and low shed dormers
Property Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sloping lawns, particularly in front of houses on I Street between 26th and 27th streets; many with low brick walls and cement stairs Rows of mature, evenly spaced palms planted around the perimeter of Marshall Park
Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally uniform setback of approximately 20-25 feet from the sidewalk to primary, street-facing building facades with 8-foot-wide wide parking strips and sidewalks Rows of mature, evenly spaced, deciduous street trees—most often sycamore, elm, and palm trees—planted in a parking strip along the street curb Evidence of removed hitching posts in the form of L-shaped concrete strips next to street curbs, especially on J Street between 26th and 27th streets

Boundaries & Location

The following map shows the boundaries and location of the Marshall 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 168. Map of the Marshall Park Historic District. Source: City of Sacramento and Page & Turnbull, 2019.

District-Specific Standards & Criteria

Design Principle

Alterations or additions to contributing properties and new infill development must seamlessly blend with the well-preserved historic architecture of the historic district.

Rationale

The Marshall Park Historic District contains a grouping of historic single-family residences clustered around Marshall Park, some of which have been converted to multi-family use. Some 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 Marshall 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.
- 1.3 Restore window and door openings that have been covered or filled in, where appropriate.



Figure 169. Many contributing buildings in the district have decorative exterior ornamentation that should be maintained and preserved.



Figure 170. Houses with prominent front-facing gabled roofs characterize streetscapes in the district.

2. Additions & Accessory Structures for Contributing Resources

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Avoid additions that alter the historic district's dominant pattern of front-facing gabled or hipped roofs.

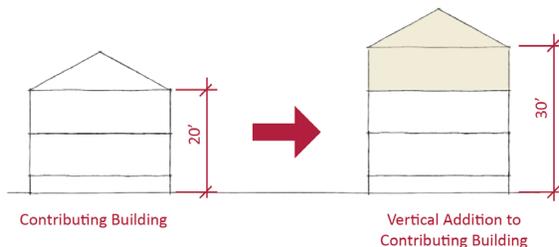


Figure 171. Additions should not cause a building's height to exceed 150% of its historic height.

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

- 3.1 Design the scale, massing, and proportions of new construction to be compatible with those of adjacent contributing buildings on the same block.
- 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 to maintain the existing street façade height of adjacent contributing buildings.
- 3.2 Draw inspiration for the design of multi-family residential properties from contributing multi-family residential properties in the district.
- 3.3 Preserve the historic pattern and articulation of long, narrow 40' x 160' parcels, wherever possible.
- Consider breaking down the massing of large infill developments into smaller masses that reflect the historic lot pattern.
- 3.4 Design new construction that is sympathetic to the historic district's dominant pattern of front-facing gabled or hipped roofs.
- 3.5 Consider providing street-facing, covered front porches or entries at new infill development.

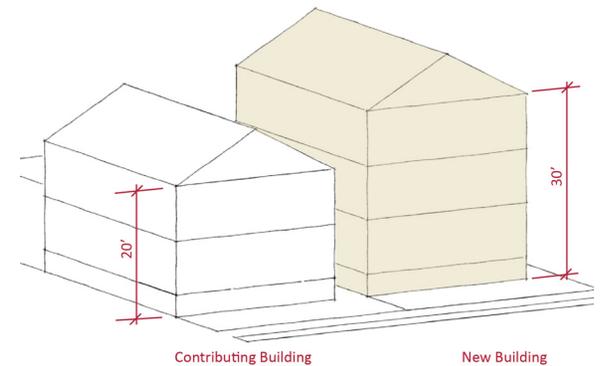


Figure 172. The height of new buildings should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.

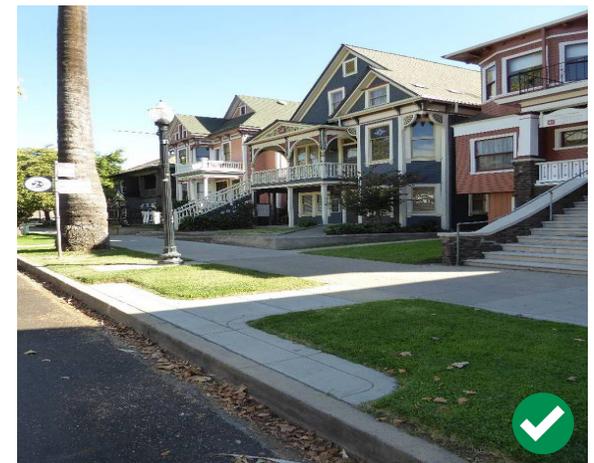


Figure 173. Contributing buildings on the same block often have a similar setback from the street.

4. Site Features, Streetscape, & Landscaping

- 4.1 Preserve, maintain, and, where necessary, repair and restore historic plantings and landscaping features in Marshall Park.
- 4.2 Pursue a “complete street” approach that enhances pedestrian safety while preserving the historic district’s surrounding residential character.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 Avoid creating new curb cuts or driveways along 27th, I and J Streets.
 - Locate parking and service access along alleys, and use landscaping features to screen it from the public right-of-way, wherever possible.

5. Alley Infill

- 5.1 On a typical unsplit parcel, set back alley infill buildings a minimum of 30 feet from the primary building on the parcel. If a parcel is split, set back alley infill buildings a minimum of 15 feet from the lot split.
- 5.2 The height of alley infill should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.

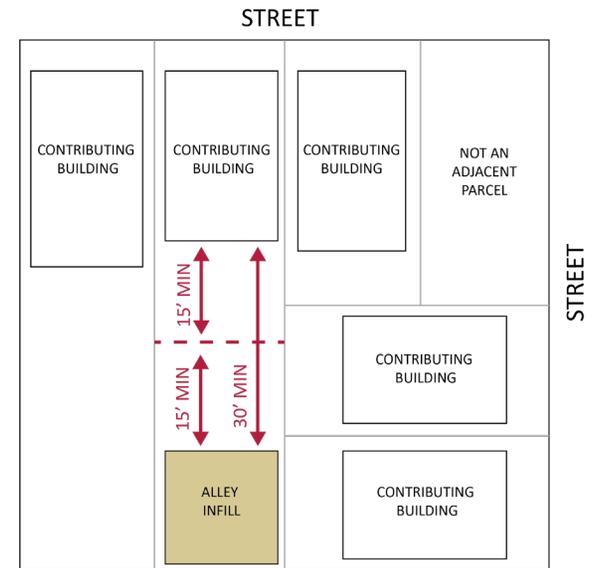


Figure 174. Historic landscaping features, such as this retaining wall, contribute to the character of the district.