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## Planning commission agenda request re: Placerville Historic District

1 message

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**Jennifer Chapman** <jenchapman415@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 7:19 AM

To: pv.planning@gmail.com, Pierre Rivas <privas@cityofplacerville.org>, Andrew Painter <apainter@cityofplacerville.org>

Cc: ruthmichelson <ruthmichelson@sbcglobal.net>, SueTaylor Design <suetaylordesign@comcast.net>, Sue Taylor <Sue-Taylor@comcast.net>, Michael Frenn <ohbw01@gmail.com>

April 30, 2021

Subject: Planning Commission Agenda Item Request - 2018 Reconnaissance Survey Downtown Placerville Historic District

Dear City Planning / Development Services Dept. on behalf of Placerville Planning Commission:

I am hoping the the Planning Commission can revisit the 2012 draft Downtown Historic District map and review & discuss the Reconnaissance Survey for the Downtown Placerville Historic District that was done in 2018 for Friends of Historic Hangtown. The summary documents and an example of a survey form are attached. I would like to be able to provide background information and discuss how to engage building owners in understanding what a historic district is and what it means to be a "contributer".

This draft survey considers only the single historic context of architectural history. A more in depth survey is needed to address other contexts such as the history of mining, transportation, and development of the City of Placerville as a commercial center during the gold rush and the gold mining period.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Chapman  
Placerville Resident

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Jennifer Chapman  
415-419-4846

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### 3 attachments



**Placerville Historic District\_structures.pdf**  
319K



**DRAFT\_Placerville Survey.pdf**  
1418K



**487\_Confidence Firehouse.pdf**  
270K

**Placerville Historic Resources Inventory / Reconnaissance Survey**  
**Downtown area - North Main, west to east; South Main, east to west**  
**Original draft by Judith Marvin, Architectural Historian / for Friends of Historic Hangtown (FOHH)**

**XXX NRHP listed (3) (5 buildings) / XXX appears eligible for NRHP as District Contributors (37) + (1)**  
*Contributors include Belltower, Druid Monument, Clay Street Bridge – and Hangtown Creek Retaining Walls*

**Buildings with Restoration Potential (23) + (10?) ... Total Commercial Buildings (87)**

**Period of Significance: 1848 – 1942 = Discovery to Gold to the End of Non-Essential Gold Mining**

Address, Main St.	Name	Date	Style/Elements	Status
251 (Lot 6, Bl. 41, part)	Hunger's Butcher Shop - California Kitchen	1856-1862?	2 story, Stucco, tile, arches	Restoration potential
*259-263 (Lots 1-3, Bl. 41?)	Lofty Lou's	Ca. 1880s?	2-story brick, 3 bays, dentils, paired windows	Historic District Contributing Element
*301-303	Herrick Building	1855, restored	2-story brick, 5 bays, hip roof, iron shutters	Historic District Contributing Element
*305	Hangman's Tree	Ca. 1890s, restored	2 story, Ca. rustic siding, pediment windows, recessed storefront, panels	Historic District Contributing Element
*311-321 (Lot 13, Bl. 29)	J. D. O'Donnell's Bldg - Farm Table/Winterhill	1856/1901	2 story, 2 bays, hip roof, brackets, hip roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*325 (Lot 11, Bl. 39)	Tracy's Shoes- Heyday Café (Seligman?)	1856/1876 façade Robert Reynolds bldr.	Brick, dentils, recessed entry, V-rustic on rear, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
327 (Lot 12, Bl. 39)	Mierson or Seligman Bldg - Tree House	1856?	Prominent front gable, Modern brick façade	Restoration potential
339	Seligman & Neubaumer - Combella's	1856/1888, Modern brick façade, Robert Reynolds bldr.	Modern, front gable Stucco, alum, twin gables	Restoration potential
*357-359 (Lot 5, Bl. 39)	White & Metzler's Brick/HarveyDorsey Brick- Robinson's Drugs	1856, modern storefront	2 story, 7 bays, Hip roof, brick, incised panels, new brick wainscoting, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
369	Arcade Restaurant - Sanitex Cleaners	1856, modern façade	Modern, Stucco, brick and glass façade, frame bldg..	Restoration potential
375	Barss/Randolph Jewelers (1946)	1856, modern facade	Modern, stucco, brick and glass façade, frame bldg..	Restoration potential
399 (379?) (Lots 2-3, Block 39)	Kline/Bamberger & Haas - Gold Country Artists Gallery	1866?, 1920s transoms, modern facade	Modern, Stucco, dentils, gable, new brick, canopy	Restoration potential
385 (Lot 1, Bl. 39)	Photo Studio, Post Office – Centro Bakery	1855, modern facade	Modern, 2 story, brick, 5 bays, dentils, modern stucco and brick facade	Restoration potential
*Belltower	Belltower	1898/ restored 1970	Steel frame, bell	Historic District Contributing Element
*409 (Lot XX, Bl. 38)	Shelly Inch Bldg., Placerville News	1856-1870/1898 second story	2 story, 5 bays, Columns and brackets, recessed storefronts, transoms	Historic District Contributing Element
*419-423	Masonic Temple - Cyclery/Bene Rest.	1893, Walter N. Cuthbertson arch., S.G.	3 story brick, hip roof, quoins	Historic District Contributing Element

		Beach & Co. bldr		
*429	Lower Fairchild Drugstore Bldg., Oyster Bar/Framing	1903, F.A. Gerbode bldr., S.F. designer	2 story, 3 bays, Brackets, dentils, hip roof	Historic District Contributing Element
435	Adams & Co. Express/Florence Clothing 1947	1856, modern facade	Brick, dentils, 1930s canopy, stucco, gable roof "Florence"	Restoration potential
437	Wells Fargo/Plaza Saloon/Fair Market - Thomas Kinkade Gallery	1856, modern facade	2 story brick, 2 bays, stucco, flat roof, 1930s canopy	Restoration potential
*441 (Lot xx, Bl. 38)	Placerville Hardware, Jos. L. Smith and I.H. Nash, 1872 Alderson & Weatherwax	1856, Silas Randall, bldr.	2 story brick, 3 bays, stucco, corrugated metal canopy, hip roof, recessed storefront	Historic District Contributing Element
*443 (Lot 14, Bl. 38 part)	Mountain Democrat - Placerville Hardware	1856	1 story brick, stucco, glass, hollow tile, bd form concrete on east side, hip roof	Historic District Contributing Element
447	Needle Crafts/Yoga	1930s?	Concrete, metal windows, flat roof	Restoration potential
*465 (459?)	Upper Fairchild Bldg., Lobos del Mar	1913	2 story, brackets, dentils, hip roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*467-469	IOOF Bldg. , Morning Star Lodge #20	1911	Romanesque stone, stained glass, low gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
***487	Confidence Firehouse #1, City Hall	1860	Italianate, 2 story brick, Arched windows, brackets, gable roof	NRHP listed + Contributing Element
**489	Emigrant Jane Johnson House, City Hall, Placerville News	1861, NRHP, Moses Miller bldr.	Pilasters, arches 2 story brick, hip roof "J.S. 1861" with eagle	Historic District Contributing Element
*495	El Dorado County Courthouse	1912, restored 1970, Cuff & Diggs arch, Clifford B. Rusher, bldr.	Renaissance Revival, White tile, concrete, 2 story, arched windows, hip roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*515	Post Office	1939, remodeled 1974, Louis A. Simon architect, Federal Works Admin., Neal A. Melick engineer	Art Deco, concrete, grilles, hip roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*525	Board of Supervisors	1936	Art Deco, concrete & stucco, flat roof	Historic District Contributing Element
537	Royal Six Tattoo	1940?	Craftsman house, false front addition, gable roof	Restoration potential?
549	Purity Store - Town Hall	1930s?/Modern	Modern, Stucco	Restoration potential
559	Carbon Copy	1920?	2 story Bungalow w. dormers, hip roof, modern stucco front	Restoration potential

*577	Sweetie Pies	1895	Queen Anne, with Craftsman addition, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*585	Serendipity	1890s/1930?, determined eligible	Queen Anne, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*589	Main St. Melters	1902, determined eligible	2 story Queen Anne, shingles, tower, hip and gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*Clay Street Bridge		1919, A.S. Lyon	Concrete spandrel	Historic District Contributing Element
*Hangtown Creek Retaining Walls			<i>See Caltrans Cultural Resources Study</i>	Historic District Contributing Element
Ivy House site / Parking Lot		1864-1964		Restoration potential
*Druid Monument		1926, John Porporato architect, fountains removed 1960s, 1972 rededicated to Senator H.E. Dillinger	Corinthian column, stained glass torch	Historic District Contributing Element
***594 (Lot 4, Bl. 21)	J. Pearson Soda Works - Cozmic Café	1859/1897, NRHP	2-story stone, gable roof	NRHP listed + Contributing Element
**582	Empress		1 story stone, iron shutters, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
564	Tortilla Flats Cantina	???	Stucco and tile, brick façade, 2 story in rear	Restoration potential?
	Tortilla Flats	???	1 story, Stucco and tile, new brick arches, mural	Restoration potential?
*542 (Lot 10, Bl 21 part)	Memorial Bldg., American Legion Post #119 - Chamber of Commerce	1925, 1950 ext. to rear	Tudor, 2 story brick, bay	Historic District Contributing Element
***524	Fountain & Tallman Soda Works, Placerville Museum	1852, NRHP	2 story stone, brick arches, iron shutters, side gable roof	NRHP listed + Contributing Element
*520	PG&E - El Dorado Law	Late 1920s	Brick, 1 story, side gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*516 (Lot 16, Bl 16 part)	Little PG&E, Bldg - Pregnancy Clinic	Late 1920	Brick, dentils, new façade, side gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
512	Safeway – Round Table Pizza (site of Presbyterian Church)	1930s/40s?	Stucco,	Restoration potential
484	JP Office - Crystal Ship	1872?/1930s	Stucco, flat roof	Restoration potential
*482 (Lot 1-3, Bl 40)	Rainbow Club/Roller Bldg - Bricks Eats & Drinks	1930s	1 story brick, recessed entries, flat roof	Historic District Contributing Element
474-476	Law Offices	???	New brick, canvas awning	Restoration potential?

*462-466 (Lot 45, Bl 48)	Studio B, Midnight Kin	1910?/1920s	Spanish Eclectic, Stucco and tile, inserts,	Historic District Contributing Element
452	Hangtown Antiques	???	New façade, false front, canopy, low gable roof	Restoration potential?
450	Violets are Blue	???	Art Deco, stucco, recessed entry, flat roof	Restoration potential?
*444 (Lot 11, Bl 40)	Gridley's Grocery - Old Town Grill	1856/1930s	Firebrick	Historic District Contributing Element
*442 (Lot 12, Bl 40)	Hart Bldg. - Cuppa Coffee	1856, stucco facade	2 story brick, 2 bays, stucco, iron shutters, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*420	Empire Theatre - Empire Antiques, Pet Spa	1930	2 story stucco, marquee, stucco and tile, flat roof, flat roof	Historic District Contributing Element
400	Cash Mercantile	1930s	Modern, 2 story false front, balcony, low gable roof	Restoration potential
398	Ben Franklin - Candy Strike Emporium	1930s?	Stucco, aluminum windows, low gable roof	Restoration potential
*384 (Lot 17 & 18 part)	Round Tent Store - Cascada Cantina	1856/1928 moved back, 1966 remodel	Brick, dentils, 1920s façade with columns, flat roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*376 (Lot 18, Bl 40 part)	Round Tent Bar - Mattywags	Ca. 1880s	Brick and tile, gable roof, frame bldg., recessed entry	Historic District Contributing Element
372-374	Thai Noodle, Gold Digger Bar	???	Modern, False front	Restoration potential?
366	Vibes Up	1850s?/modern facade	Brick w. A-Line facade	Restoration potential
364 (Lot 21, Bl 40)	Reynolds & Co - Body Basics	1856/1918 second story, iron front, modern facade	Gable, 1960s tile and stucco, canopy	Restoration potential
360	Petit Van Voorhies Drug Store/Wm. Smith	1856, modern façade	Stucco & cobblestone, aluminum windows, gable, frame in rear	Restoration potential
352 (Lot 22, Bl 40 west part)	Van Voorries Iron Door/Front Bldg	1856, modern façade	Stucco & cobblestone, stone behind	Restoration potential
346	Wine Smith	???	Stucco and tile, awning, flat roof	Restoration potential?
*326-328-330	Blue Bell Café - The Bookery (Butts 1912)	1938	2 story stucco and tile, side gable	Historic District Contributing Element
*320	Ecological	1930s	Brick, stucco	Historic District Contributing Element
318	Placerville Flowers	???, Modern façade	Brick, stucco	Restoration potential?
316	Hangtown Originals	1860s?, modern facade	False front, aluminum	Restoration potential
*300 (Lot 33, Bl 40)	Hotel Placerville - Cary House	1908/1931, restored 1970s	4 story brick, flat roof	Historic District Contributing Element
*260-262 (Lots 1-3, Bl 49)	Arch Saloon - Toys	1866/1890s, restored 1964	Brick, round corner, incised panels, dentils, Eastlake panels, gable roof	Historic District Contributing Element

254	Dillinger's Furniture - Man Cave	???	Brick, tile Mansard roof	Restoration potential?
250 (Lot 5, Bl 49)	City Bakery - The Gem	1856, modern façade	Tile and stucco	Restoration potential
*248 (Lot 6, Bl 49)	Cyrus Bayles Bldg., post office 1854-58- Western Wear	1853, modern facade	Brick, new façade, stucco, flat roof	Historic District Contributing Element

## References

El Dorado County Historical Museum

2010 *Exploring Main Street*. El Dorado County Historical Museum, Placerville.

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2002 *Placerville Reflections*. El Dorado County Historical Society, Placerville.

Maniery, Mary, and Cindy Baker

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Placerville, City of

1984 City of Placerville Historic Survey Inventory.

Thompson, Joyce, and Harry Critchfield

2013 *Placerville Then & Now*. El Dorado Museum Foundation, Placerville.

Woodbridge, Sally B.

1988 *California Architecture, Historic American Buildings Survey*. Chronicle Books, San Francisco.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES STUDY  
MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL DISTRICT  
PLACERVILLE, EL DORADO COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA**

Prepared for:

Friends of Historic Hangtown  
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Prepared by:

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September 2018

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The proposed Historic Main Street Commercial District is located in the City of Placerville in central El Dorado County (Figure 1). It is located in the SE ¼ of Section 7, T10N, R11E, Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian, as depicted on the Placerville, Calif. 7.5" map, at an elevation of approximately 1870 ft. elevation (Figure 2). The area consists of a curving Main Street with commercial buildings on either side. State Route 50 is located immediately to the north, and Hangtown Creek flows westerly through the town.

This Cultural Resources Study presents the results of the research, survey, and evaluation of the architectural resources located within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the District.

As a result of this study, thirty six (36) buildings within the Study Area appear eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as a Historic District, while an additional three (3) were previously listed on the NRHP. Three additional resources, the Druid Monument, Clay Street Bridge and Retaining Walls, and the Bell Tower were also found to be contributors to the proposed Historic District. Forty eight (48) buildings were found ineligible for listing, either due to insufficient age, or lack of integrity to the period of significance (1850-1941).



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## 1. PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The proposed Historic Main Street Commercial District is located in the City of Placerville in central El Dorado County (Figure 1). It is located in the SE ¼ of Section 7, T10N, R11E, Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian, as depicted on the 1973 Placerville, Calif. 7.5" map, at an elevation of approximately 1870 ft. elevation (Figure 2). The area consists of a northward curving Main Street with commercial buildings on either side. State Route 50 is located immediately to the north, and Hangtown Creek flows westerly through the town. The Study Area included all of the buildings and structures on Main Street between Sacramento Street on the west and Cedar Ravine on the East, including the Druid Monument, and Clay Street Bridge and Retaining Walls.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

Background research was conducted to identify previously recorded cultural resources and studies within and adjacent to the Study Area. The background research consisted of literature and map reviews, and archival research. In addition, the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, California Inventory of Historic Resources, Directory of Properties in the Historic Property Data File for El Dorado County, and *Historic Spots in California* were reviewed.

Architectural Historian Judith Marvin conducted archival research for the Study Area in June, July, and August 2018 in repositories in El Dorado and Calaveras counties. Research focused on examining historic maps (especially the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps), written histories, official records, previously prepared reports on the history of the area, and oral interviews. Of particular assistance were the historical resources inventories of Placerville's architectural resources (Laarveld, *et al.* 1984), which were studied for their invaluable information.

The following repositories and individuals were contacted to identify known historic land uses and the locations of research materials pertinent to the Study Area:

1. El Dorado County Historical Museum, Placerville
2. Fountain-Tallman Museum, Placerville
3. Foothill Resources, Ltd., Murphys
4. Marilyn Ferguson, Fountain-Tallman Museum
5. Jennifer Chapman and Sue Taylor, Friends of Historic Hangtown

See the Bibliography for additional resources consulted.

Primary historical themes within the Study Area focus on commerce and settlement.

## 3. FIELD METHODS

Architectural Historian Judith Marvin conducted a pedestrian survey of the Study Area on 6 June 2018. The area was walked, notes were made on architectural features, condition, and integrity, and photographs of each building were taken with a digital camera. All buildings within the Study Area (Figure 3) were surveyed and researched.

Maps used for the fieldwork were the Google Earth Placerville Maps, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, and others as noted in the bibliography. Field survey documentation consisted of notes regarding the architectural resources and a photo log to document digital images taken during survey.

#### 4. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

**To be produced for nomination**

#### 5. PLACERVILLE'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

The historically and architecturally significant buildings in Placerville's Commercial District are diverse in style, as well as in method and period of construction. They were built of adobe, stone, brick, frame, and concrete and had sidings of brick, wood, stucco, and plaster. The architectural styles represented were Greek Revival, Neoclassical, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Mission Revival, False-front commercial, Craftsman, Spanish Eclectic, Tudor Revival, and Art Moderne.

Unfortunately, few of Placerville's 1850s-1880s buildings have survived unaltered to this day. Lost to the vicissitudes of fire, time, demolition, and supplanted by more modern buildings or storefronts during the late 1890s-early 1930s hard rock mining and railroad transportation boom, they were replaced with the frame, brick, and concrete buildings of that era. Nonetheless, Main Street today retains its integrity to that period to a remarkable degree.

Although the Placerville area began life as a rough and tumble Gold Rush town, its architectural traditions have always been firmly rooted in those of the American eastern seaboard. Most of the residences and commercial establishments were built by local carpenters and builders, in later years from pattern books and style guides, and not as high examples of any particular style. In most instances they were vernacular interpretations that do not conform to pure academic categories. These vernacular buildings commonly combine elements from several different design types or historical periods. Generally a more reduced and simplified form of decorative treatment is displayed compared to high-style examples. Many defy precise classification and it is only possible to identify subtle influences and tendencies toward a particular style. However, no matter how ambiguous these vernacular buildings may appear in terms of style, they are, nonetheless, accurate reflections of the taste at the time of their construction as well as an important indication of the building techniques and materials of their day.

It is this aspect, however, that provided the architectural styles in Placerville, with a compatibility not often found in major cities and commercial centers. Most of the homes and commercial establishments constructed prior to the 1950s were of a harmonious style, shape, size, mass, and dimension. Therefore, the 1850s through 1941 (World War II), has been selected as the period of significance for the Historic District.

Commercial buildings, usually built close together on both sides of Main Street, were initially of frame construction, one or two stories high, with gable roofs, front porches, and French doors. After numerous buildings were lost to fires, the scourge of the Mother Lode in the early days, more affluent merchants began to rebuild in the more permanent brick or stone. Brick and lime kilns, which took advantage of the abundant local supplies of clay and limestone, were established in several communities and, by the mid-1860s, Main Street was lined with these Neoclassical buildings with gable roofs, false fronts with simple cornicing, brick and stone relieving arches over the windows and doorways, and with iron shutters for protection from both fire and thievery.

Hard-rock mining, which had languished in the decades since the mid-1850s, was rejuvenated in the late 1880s and continued through World War I. A combination of advanced technologies, primarily the invention of dynamite and the development of square-set timbering in the Comstock lode, along with investment of foreign capital, provided for the resurgence of the mining industry in El Dorado County and the foothills. With this boom came a new growth in the towns and communities, including Placerville.

By the late 1800s, the business portion of Main Street consisted of a continuous series of brick, stone, and frame storefronts with shed-roofed porches, supported by wooden posts, over the sidewalks.

It was in the 1920s and 1930s that Placerville's commercial center attained its present appearance, with a combination of one- and two-story commercial buildings lining both sides of Main Street. With lower story frame porches or canvas sidewalks extending over the sidewalks as protection from weather, Main Street reached its ascendancy.

During this period also, a romantic nostalgia for the Hispanic culture culminated in the development of the Mission Revival and Spanish Eclectic styles, both in commercial and residential architecture. Built of brick or stucco, with colonnades, arches, pillars, tile roofs, decorative tilework, flooring, and metalwork, the style was used extensively for commercial buildings, hotels, railway stations, and public buildings. The immense popularity of the style, coupled with a period of economic development in El Dorado County, spurred many property owners to cover the facades of their original brick and stone buildings with stucco in the Spanish Eclectic style.

The Art Deco, or Art Moderne, style is seen in Placerville in many of Main Street's commercial establishments, and is the dominant style in today's storefronts. The use of red and yellow firebrick, often with decorative colored tiles, is prevalent, as are smooth stucco surfaces with various elements of horizontal and vertical grooves, zigzags, chevrons, and other stylized geometric motifs as decorative elements on the facade. Several of the storefront wainscotings are decorated with ceramic tile in bright colors. Most of the storefront entryways from this period are recessed, some with tile floors.

The architectural resources in Placerville's Historic Commercial District are primarily commercial buildings, but also include three Queen Anne residences. The majority of the commercial buildings were built of brick, many in the mid-1850s after fires decimated the early frame buildings. Unfortunately, none of the buildings retains its 1850s appearance, and most have been coated with stucco. An economic boom in the 1930s resulted in the remodeling of many of the facades in the Art Deco style, and the construction of new in-fill buildings. Their styles are described below:

### **Mother Lode Architecture**

Mother Lode architecture is not so much a singular building style as it is an amalgam of styles that cohere into a distinctive whole. It is best identified on a community level, as reflected in an entire streetscape, rather than within an individual structure. For the purposes of defining it, however, several components are offered as distinctive characteristics.

*Streetscape.* The commercial streetscape consisted of mercantiles, office buildings, banks, hotels, stables, lodge halls, churches, city hall, courthouse, and fire stations. By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Main Street had a full row of business buildings joined by party walls or built closely enough together to create a single block-long façade. The street became a series of storefronts framing double doors and large display windows, with rows of sash windows with decorative lintels on the floors above. Many of the buildings sported ornate, protruding cornices marking their flat rooftops. The surface of the streetscape was broken by decorative windows and turrets and by a variety of textures in stone, brick, and wood.

*Storefronts.* The stepping alignment of storefronts is one of the most noticeable elements of the Mother Lode style. The top edge of most buildings is usually defined by a horizontal band that, when combined with those of neighboring buildings, creates a stair-step effect. There is variety in building heights, upper story window patterns, canopies, and minor design elements, which, combined with the otherwise cohesive use of materials, details, and scale, contributes to the overall character of Mother Lode architecture.

*Upper Story Windows.* Windows on the upper stories are repeated along the street, creating a visual unity. They are of frame construction, single or multi-light. Buildings of brick or stone often have relieving arches.

*Lower Story Windows.* Most original store-front windows have large panes, often with multi-light transoms to provide light to the rear of the shop. Many buildings have recessed entryways, with large windows to display wares. These recessed entrances establish a pattern along the street.

*Doorways.* Many of the commercial buildings have recessed doorways, providing respite from inclement weather and clearance for door swings. Doorframes are of wood construction, often French doors with recessed panels below multi-lights. Iron shutters are frequently affixed to exterior doorways, providing protection from fire and theft.

*Balconies and Porches.* The prevalence of two-story balconies is an important design theme of the late 1880s and early 1890s and provides a cohesiveness to the architecture of Main Street. Single-story buildings have projecting shed-roofed porches supported by posts on the sidewalks or brackets on the facades.

*Cladding.* Stone, brick, and boards have interesting colors and textures, and establish patterns along the street. They are not covered with synthetic imitations. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, many of the original claddings have been covered with stucco.

*Rooflines.* Gold Rush-era roofs predominate, and are usually flat or hipped with relatively simple parapets and cornices, often with a dentil design. Victorian-era rooflines, however, are ornate and supported by elaborate corbels and brackets. Some buildings have front-gable roofs, often with false-fronts, while a few have side-gable roofs.

*False-fronts.* Many buildings have a noticeable false front projecting above a gabled roof. They may be constructed of stone, brick, or horizontal or vertical boards.

*Finishes.* Edges of buildings are typically finished with edge boards and trim, or quoins, and major subdivisions of facades are emphasized with molding or band courses. Most of the buildings are capped with a cornice, and moldings and decorative bands reinforce the stair-step appearance of the streetscape.

## **Commercial Storefronts**

The typical 19<sup>th</sup> century storefront consisted of single or double doors flanked by display windows. The entrance was frequently recessed, not only to protect the customer from inclement weather but to increase the amount of space in which to display merchandise. In some cases an additional side door provided access to the upper floors. Thin structural members of cast iron or wood, rather than masonry piers, usually framed the storefront. The windows themselves were raised off the ground by wood or cast iron or pressed metal panels or bulkheads; frequently a transom or series of transoms (consisting of single or multiple panes of glass were placed above each window and door. The signboard above the storefront (the fascia covering the structural beam) became a prominent part of the building. Canvas awnings, or in some cases tin or wooden canopies, often shaded storefronts of the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. Iron fronts were frequently put onto existing buildings as a way of giving them an up-to-date appearance. Except for expanding the display window area to the maximum extent possible and the increasing use of canvas awnings, few major technical innovations in storefront design can be detected from the 1850s through 1900.

The first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the growing use of decorative transom lights above display windows; in some cases, these transoms could be opened to permit air circulation into the store. Electric incandescent lights enabled storeowners to call attention to their entrance and display windows and permitted nighttime shopping. In the 1920s and 1930s a variety of new materials were introduced into the storefront, including aluminum and stainless steel framing

elements, pigmented structural glass, tinted and mirrored glass, glass block and neon (Jandi 1982:2-3).

### **Queen Anne Revival (1880s–1900s)**

Although derived in name, if little else, from an English architectural movement centered around architect Richard Norman Shaw, the local interpretation of the Queen Anne style was a purely American phenomenon. Queen Anne buildings are characterized by complex roofs of fairly steep pitch; combinations of siding materials such as lap boards and patterned shingles; rounded and three-sided slant bays of one or more stories; towers and turrets; porches and balconies, sometimes rounded in configuration; and by the incorporation of ornamental elements such as turned wood columns and spindles, sawn bargeboards and brackets, stained and leaded glass, and molded plasterwork. Examples range from small L-shaped cottages with a bay window on the projecting wing and a porch with a couple of columns and brackets on the perpendicular wing to two-and-a-half story “tower houses” with a profusion of architectural elements and ornamental embellishments. Carpenter Gothic was a variant that became quite popular with wood frame churches. Eastlake or Stick influenced houses of this era are generally similar in massing, with squared bays and a linear two-dimensional quality to their ornament. The Queen Anne style was utilized both for the large mansions of the commercial barons as well as for hundreds of small homes and farms throughout the county. Pattern books, which enabled any housebuilder to construct a modern, sophisticated dwelling, were used throughout the area.

## **6. PREVIOUS HISTORICAL RESOURCES INVENTORIES**

Previous architectural resources inventories had been conducted in the Study Area, all by Betty Laarveld and others for the Placerville Historic Advisory Committee in 1984 and 1985. At that time, the current Department of Parks and Recreation forms were completed, resulting in the inventory of 48 buildings in the Study Area (City of Placerville).

DPR forms (Laarveld 1984) on all the buildings in the Study Area were reviewed. While all of the inventoried Laarveld buildings were historical due to age, many had been significantly altered and no longer retained any integrity to their period of significance (1850-1941). Since that time other buildings have been altered or remodeled, while two have been restored (Herrick and Hangman’s Tree buildings).

## **7. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **A. Findings**

Thirty six (36) buildings within the Study Area appear eligible for listing on the National Register and to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA as a result of this study (see Appendix A for current DPR 523 Primary Record forms). Three (3) properties were previously listed on the NRHP: John Pearson Soda Works, 594 Main Street; Fountain-Tallman Soda Works, 524 Main Street; and Confidence Hall, 487 Main Street. In addition, three structures, Druid Monument, the Clay Street Bridge and Retaining Walls, and the Fire Tower, also appear eligible for listing as contributors to the Historic District.

### **B. Conclusions**

The properties recorded for this Study appear eligible for listing on the NRHP as a Historical District under Criteria A and C, at the State level of significance. **The full evaluation for next phase.**

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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### Maps

Anderson, J.M., and XX

1872 Map of the City of Placerville.

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1890 Placerville, California

1891 Placerville, California

1898 Placerville, California

1910 Placerville, California

1942 Placerville, California. 1910 updated to 1942.

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1973 Placerville, Calif. 7.5 minute series.

### **Interviews**

Ferguson, Marilyn, Fountain-Tallman Museum  
2018 Notes on interview of 6 June 2018. On file Foothill Resources, Ltd., Murphys, California.

Taylor, Sue, Friends of Historic Hangtown  
2018 Notes on Interview of 6 August 2018. On file, Foothill Resources, Ltd., Murphys, California

### **Preparer Qualifications**

This architectural study was undertaken by Judith Marvin of Foothill Resources, Ltd. Ms. Marvin conducted the architectural survey and evaluations, the historical research for the APE overview and the site-specific history, and prepared this document. Ms. Marvin is a historian and architectural historian who has been practicing in California since 1983. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Berkeley, with special emphasis in California history, and is listed in the California Council for the Promotion of History Register of Professional Historians. She has conducted architectural resources studies and evaluations for the National Park Service, California Department of Parks and Recreation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), state and local water districts, Federal Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement (HBRR) studies and numerous historical and architectural studies for the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in Districts 1-10.



## 9. FIGURES

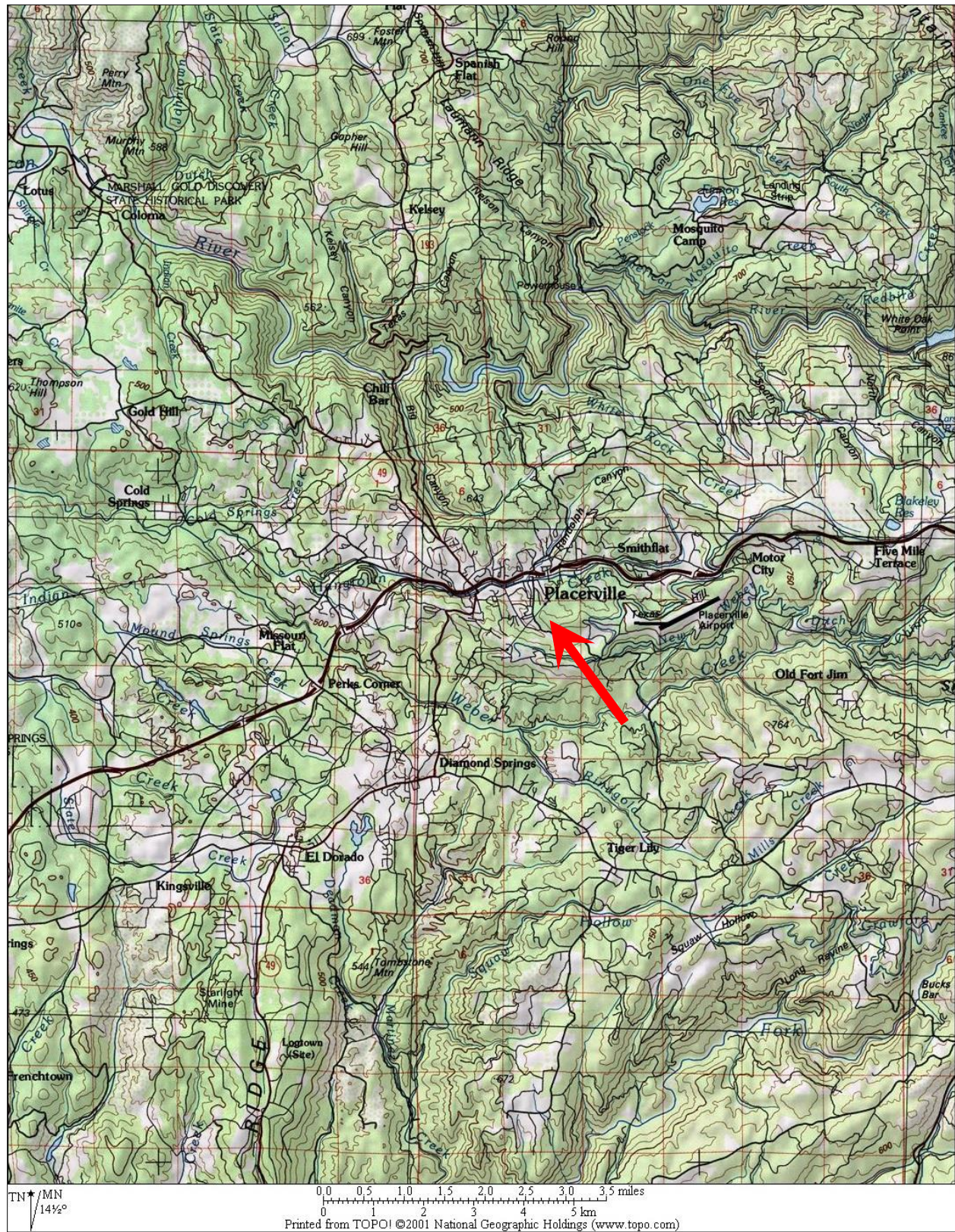


Figure 1. Vicinity map.



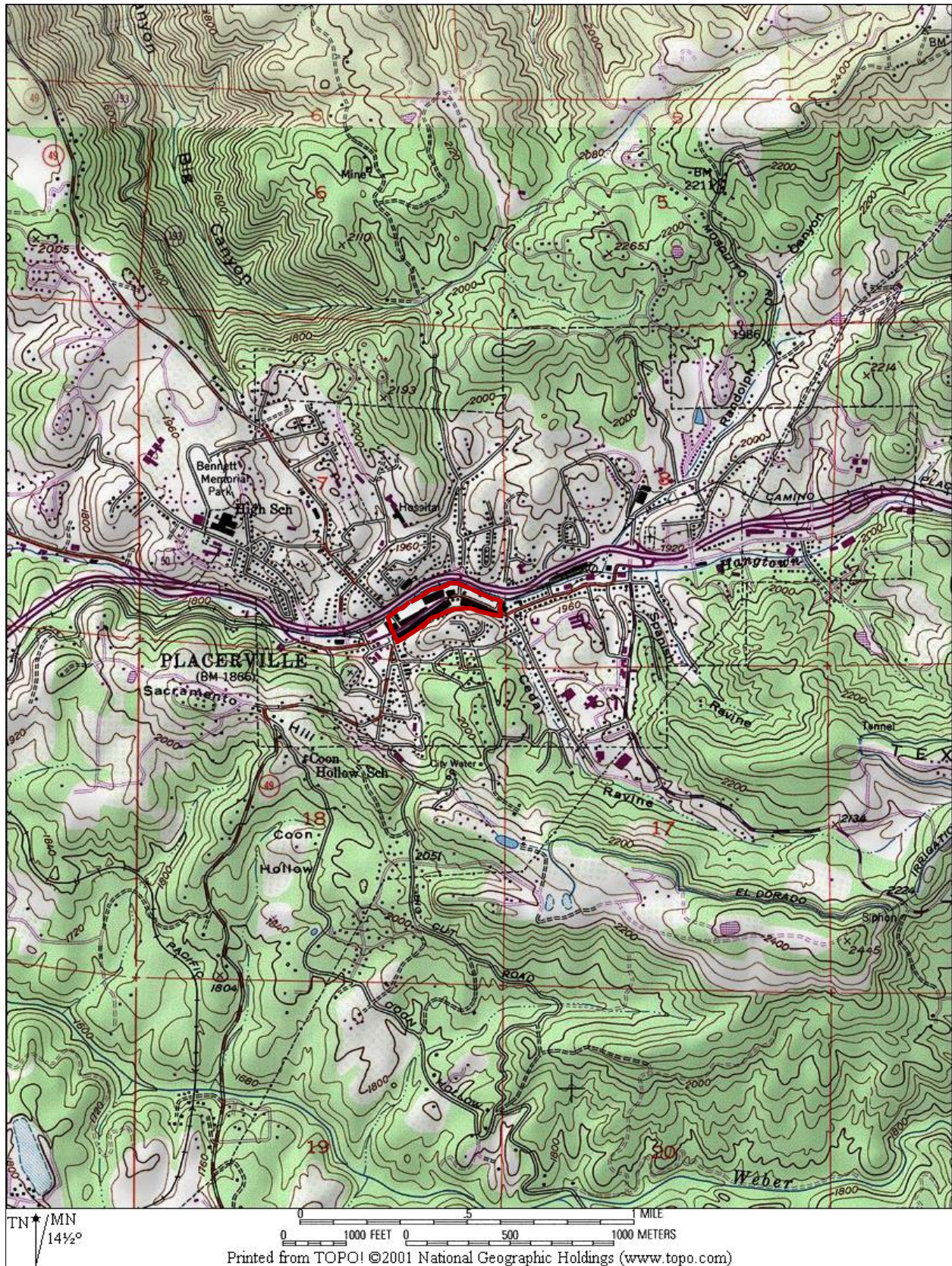


Figure 2. Location map. Placerville, California (U.S. Geological Survey 1973).





Figure 3. Map of Study

## 10. TABLE OF SURVEYED ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

State of California—The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # P-09-5151 **3**  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code 3B

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 1

\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 487 Main Street

P1. Other Identifier: Confidence Firehouse No. 1, City Hall

\*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

\*a. County El Dorado

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Placerville, CA Date 1973 T 10N R 11E S  $\frac{1}{2}$  of SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 7, MDBM

c. Address 487 Main Street City Placerville Zip 95667

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10 mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate). APN 001-221-161

Block 38 of Placerville Townsite

\*P3a. Description: Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The Confidence Firehouse #1 is a two-story brick Italianate building erected in 1860. It has a gable roof with a stepped parapet. The primary first floor façade features a central wide arched window flanked by an arched window and arched pedestrian doorway; the central arch was originally the fire truck doorway, and was flanked by a window and pedestrian door. The lower portions of the central and westernmost arches have been blocked up with brick, while the upper portions of the arches have been filled with paneling. The upper story features five arched windows, a central tall 8/light double-hung window flanked by two narrow arched 2 light double-hung windows on either side. Lozenge shaped panels are located above each of the four smaller windows. A bulls-eye window pierces the upper gable, beneath a bracketed pedimented cornice. It is in excellent condition. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, along with the Emigrant Jane Johnson House (489 Main Street).in 1982.

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP9, Firehouse; HP14, City Hall

\*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☒ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) View North, June 2018  
Firehouse to left in photo

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Sources: ☒ Historic  
☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both  
1860

\*P7. Owner and Address:

City of Placerville  
487 Main Street  
Placerville, CA 95667

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, address)

Judith Marvin  
Foothill Resources, Ltd.  
P.O. Box 2040  
Murphys, CA 95247

\*P9. Date Recorded: 6/6/2018

\*P10. Survey Type (Describe):  
Reconnaissance

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") None

\*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☐ Continuation Sheet ☐ Building, Structure, and Object Record  
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record  
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List) \_\_\_\_\_



State of California—The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # P-09-5151

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

NRHP Status Code 3B

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_

Review Code \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of \_\_\_\_\_\*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 489 Main Street\*P1. Other Identifier: Emigrant Jane Johnson House, City Hall\*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted\*a. County El Dorado

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Placerville, CA Date 1973 T 10N R 11E S ½ of SE ¼ of Sec. 7, MDBMc. Address 489 Main Street City Placerville Zip 95667d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone 10 mE/ \_\_\_\_\_

e. Other Locational Data: e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate). APN 001-221-161

Block 38 of Placerville Townsite

\*P3a. Description: Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Built by Emigrant Jane Johnson in 1861, this is a two-story Vernacular Italianate brick building with a hip roof. The corners feature two-story Classical pilasters, while the upper story has a one-story central pilaster. A parapet on the primary façade features a rectangular pediment with J.S. and 1861 flanking an eagle. Fenestration on the upper story consists of two sets of arched French doors, each set with a multi-light transom and doors with four lights and a recessed panel. The doors originally provided access to a balcony which is no longer extant. The original first floor has been altered at least twice: once with storefront windows and now features a large arched storefront window and an arched pedestrian door; its original appearance is unknown. The building is in excellent condition. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, along with the Confidence #1 Firehouse (487 Main Street) in 1982.

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2, Residence; HP14, City Hall\*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☒ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) View North, June 2018  
Johnson House at right in photo

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources: ☒ Historic  
☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1861

\*P7. Owner and Address:

City of Placerville  
487 Main Street  
Placerville, CA 95667

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, address)

Judith Marvin  
Foothill Resources, Ltd.  
P.O. Box 2040  
Murphys, CA 95247

\*P9. Date Recorded: 6/6/2018

\*P10. Survey Type (Describe):  
Reconnaissance

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") None

\*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☐ Continuation Sheet ☐ Building, Structure, and Object Record  
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record  
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List) \_\_\_\_\_