A Guide to Preservation Projects in Central Oakland

Oakland offers rich examples of preservation in progress. Restored historic buildings -- commercial, residential and public -- are the jewels of a rapidly emerging, new Oakland. Preservation projects, both completed and proposed, can be found throughout the city anchoring a growing appreciation of our architectural heritage and our social/cultural past.

In conjunction with the 1982 California Historic Preservation Conference, the following guide highlights preservation efforts in central Oakland. Two major preservation districts are of special significance: Old Oakland-Victorian Row and Preservation Park.

Old Oakland-Victorian Row embodies the core of Oakland's nineteenth century commercial district. Bounded by Broadway, Washington St., 8th St. and 10th St., the 2-block area contains 11 Victorian structures (1868-1885) preserved through neglect and slated for restoration. These blocks are a remarkably ornate, intact relic of Oakland's commercial hub that flourished after the arrival of the transcontinental railroad. Under city guidance, a private developer, Storek & Storek, has undertaken the enormous task of restoration and developing new commercial uses such as offices, shops and restaurants. Two buildings, the Snyder Block #1 (La Salle Hotel) and the Nicholl Block (Arlington Hotel), are nearing completion.

Nearby Preservation Park, bounded by Grove, Castro, 10th and 14th Sts., represents an attempt to re-create a Victorian neighborhood setting. This city...
redevelopment project includes many architecturally and historically important buildings. Some occupy their original sites while others have been rescued and relocated from the path of the intruding Grove-Shafter Freeway. Although restoration work has not yet begun, the city has contracted with a landscape architecture firm to provide a master plan for the site. Private developers will return the buildings to economically viable uses.

Preserved

1. **Hotel Oakland**, 1912; Bliss & Faville 270 13th St. between Alice and Harrison Sts.
The 460-room Hotel Oakland prospered until the Depression. It was sold in 1942 for use as a military hospital and sat vacant after 1963. After extensive restoration and renovation, the Hotel Oakland began a new life in 1981 as senior housing. The restored ground floor rooms are on the National Register of Historic Places.

2. **Paramount Theater**, 1930-31; T. Pflueger 2025 Broadway at 21st St.
An Art Deco showplace, the Paramount was completely restored in 1973 to house the Oakland Symphony and serve as a center for the performing arts. Tours: (415) 465-6400.

3. **Camron-Stanford House**, 1876 1418 Lakeside Drive at 14th St.
This magnificent Italianate was the residence of five families (1876-1907) prior to its use as the Oakland Public Museum (1910-1967). Dedicated efforts of volunteers saved and restored this remnant of early Lake Merritt living. Tours: (415) 836-1976.

5. **Hebern Electric Code Company Building**, 1922-23; Reed & Corlett Harrison St., west side between 8th & 9th Sts. A neo-Gothic, terra-cotta marvel that once quartered a manufacturer of coding machines and early electric typewriters. It was recently refurbished to house the East Bay Asian Resource Center and commercial tenants.

6. **Pardee Mansion**, 1868
Preservation Park
672 11th St. at Castro Centerpiece and inspiration for Preservation Park, the Italianate villa was occupied by 3 generations of the illustrious Pardee family. It was built by Enoch H. Pardee, mayor of Oakland and state senator. His son, George, later lived in the house, also served as mayor, and was governor from 1903 to 1907. George C. Pardee's daughters, Madeline and Helen, resided in the home until their deaths in 1980 and 1981 respectively. The path of the Grove-Shafter Freeway was altered to preserve this important landmark. Through a nonprofit foundation, the mansion will be opened to the public as a Victorian house museum.

7. **Charles S. Greene Library**, 1902; Bliss & Faville Preservation Park 14th & Grove Sts. Built with an Andrew Carnegie gift and a public fund drive. Served as the Oakland Main Library and later as a branch library until 1973. Currently used for city offices, its long-term use remains unclear.

8. **First Unitarian Church**, 1890; W.J. Mathews Preservation Park 14th & Castro Sts. An outstanding Romanesque Revival church that will probably be the only structure in Preservation Park to continue in its original use.

9. **715-19 Washington St.** (Evers Building), 1878-79 Originally an undertaking establishment,
it was restored by a private owner and now serves as offices for the Oakland Police Officers Association.

In Progress

10. **Nicholl Block** (Arlington Hotel), 1876-77
   - Old Oakland-Victorian Row
   - Washington & 9th Sts., northeast corner
   - Extraordinary relief carvings ornament this richly-detailed Italianate hostelry. Restoration, nearing completion, will begin a new era of commercial life.

11. **Snyder Block #1** (La Salle Hotel), 1877-78; W. Stokes
   - Old Oakland-Victorian Row
   - Washington & 9th Sts., southeast corner
   - Restoration nearing completion with 2nd & 3rd floors already leased for office use.

12. **Dunn's Block**, 1878-79
    - 721-25 Washington St. between 7th & 8th Sts.
    - A fine, 3-story Italianate office building which is currently undergoing superb restoration by a private owner.

    - 1100 Broadway at 11th St.
    - Seven-story commercial building with Renaissance & Baroque ornamentation. Currently undergoing extensive rehabilitation.

(13) Security Bank & Trust Co. Building

Proposed

14. **Henry House** (Portland Hotel), 1877-78; W. Stokes
    - Old Oakland-Victorian Row
    - 470-82 9th St. between Broadway & Washington St.
    - The next project to be undertaken in Victorian Row. Current plans are to restore this building to its original use as a hotel.

15. **Snyder Block #2** (Lloyd Hotel), 1879-80; W. Stokes
    - Old Oakland-Victorian Row
    - 477-87 9th St. between Broadway & Washington St.
16. **Wilcox Block Annex**, 1868-69  
Old Oakland-Victorian Row  
461-73 9th St. between Broadway & Washington St.  
Beginning about 1873, it housed Oakland's main post office.

17. **Wilcox Block**, 1868  
Old Oakland-Victorian Row  
9th St. & Broadway, southwest corner  
Italianate brick building.

18. **Delger Block #1**, 1880-85; Kenitzer & Raun  
Old Oakland-Victorian Row  
Broadway between 9th & 10th Sts.  
Italianate commercial block.

19. **Fox Oakland Theatre Building**, 1927-28;  
Weeks & Day, M.I. Diggs  
Telegraph, west side between 18th & 19th Sts.  
An Art Deco movie palace with fanciful Hindu-Islamic motifs.

20-21. **Preservation Park**  
23. 13th St. between Grove & Castro Sts.  
On the south side of the block, seven relocated Victorian houses (20) sit on temporary foundations awaiting renovation by the city and private developers. Buildings on the north side all reside in their original locations.  
Among the latter are the Remillard House (21), 654 13th, Queen Anne style, 1886; the Ginn House (22), 660 13th, Tudor & Colonial Revival, 1890; and 682 13th (23), a bracketed Italianate house, c. 1875-1885.
Nearby Buildings of Historical and Architectural Interest


* **Central Pacific Railroad Depot** (Mi Rancho), 464-66 7th St., 1875. Mission revival style, formerly Italianate.

* **Cosmopolitan Hotel Building** (Dahlke's Bar & Restaurant), 701-17 Broadway, 1863-64. Remodeled exterior but retains a magnificent, carved cherrywood bar made in 1868.


* **First National Bank of Oakland Building** (Broadway Building), 14th St. & Broadway, northwest corner, 1907-08, L.B. Dutton. A striking flatiron structure.


* **St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church**, 21st & Grove Sts., 1891.


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(26) Greek Orthodox Church of the Assumption

---Photographs and text by Philip Bellman

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