

## National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items

x \_\_\_\_\_ New Submission                      \_\_\_\_\_ Amended Submission

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### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

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Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn, California

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### B. Associated Historic Contexts

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Gold Rush and Settlement 1849-1865

Community Development of Auburn 1865-1929

New Deal and Post World War II 1930-1960

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### C. Form Prepared by

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### D. Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.  
(\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature and title of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

Name of Multiple Property Listing

Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn, California

State

California

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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### Summary Statement

This Multiple Property Submission addresses resources in the City of Auburn, California, eligible under Criteria A, B, and C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These properties have significance for their association with events and persons locally significant in the areas of community development, economic development, commerce, agriculture, mining, logging, and associations with historically significant individuals and ethnic groups that settled in the community. The properties may also be significant in the area of Architecture as examples of architectural styles most common in Auburn during the applicable periods of significance as eligible under Criterion C.

The historic properties in Auburn, California, may be nominated for their association with events, persons and architecture locally significant in three contexts: Gold Rush and Settlement, 1849-1865, Community Development, 1865-1929, and the New Deal and post World War II era, 1930-1960.

Gold Rush and Settlement resources are typically located in the Old Town area of Auburn, along Sacramento, Washington, Main and Commercial Streets and the western portion of Lincoln Way. Some of these resources are located within the Old Town Auburn District listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970. Resources under the Community Development and New Deal and post World War II contexts are primarily located the area of Auburn known as East Auburn, or Uptown Auburn.

### Introduction

Auburn is located in the Sierra Nevada foothills approximately thirty miles east of Sacramento and twenty miles north of the Coloma gold discovery site. The town is perched on a ridge with the southeastern boundary over looking the deep American River canyon while the western area encompasses several ravines—Rich Ravine, Little Baltimore Ravine, and Crutcher Creek-- that converge into the Auburn Ravine. The town was established in 1849.

The Nisenan Indians, also known as southern Maidu, called the Auburn area home prior to the Gold Rush. Small family groups moved seasonally from the foothills to the mountain meadows and along streams. Families had specific areas where they

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returned each year to hunt, and harvest seeds, roots, acorns, and to prune and care for plants.

The Gold Rush forever changed the lives of the Nisenan. After the arrival of European gold miners and settlers, they lived on the periphery subsisting as they could. Many women and girls became domestics and some married miners. The men worked doing whatever they could, usually sporadically.

On January 24, 1848 James Marshall discovered a small piece of gold in the millrace of John Sutter’s sawmill, just a few miles from what would become Auburn. However, the news of the discovery did not reach the newspapers in the east for almost a year. Meanwhile the news reached the settlements along the Pacific coast in California and Oregon. Gold seekers from these settlements came to the Coloma area to find their fortunes in the spring of 1848.

By the summer of 1849, tens of thousands of gold seekers from around the world flooded into the foothills Sierra Nevada Mountains, including what would become Placer County, searching for instant wealth along the rivers and streams. These miners, mostly twenty to thirty-five-year old men, swarmed like locusts from one location to next as old diggings panned out and new were discovered. They moved ever up the steep canyons to the headwaters of the rivers and streams.

Mining camps quickly sprang up along the rivers and at crossroads to distant camps. Many of the camps disappeared just as quickly when the gold was panned out. In 1851 and 1852, some of the largest communities in Placer County were Auburn, Ophir, Illinois town, Todd’s Valley, Michigan Bluff and Yankee Jim’s.

Early miners used wooden bowls called bateas, metal pans, rockers, Long Toms and sluices to extract the gold from the streams. As gold became more difficult to find, other methods of extraction developed such as drift, hard rock (also known as quartz and lode) and hydraulic mining. These were large operations and required a considerable amount of money to run. Investors from faraway San Francisco, New York and England owned stock in local mining companies.

Many who came in search of gold in 1849 established businesses, planted fruit and vegetables, and continued to work their claims. As gold became more difficult to extract,

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agriculture grew in importance especially in the foothill and valley locations. The logging and ice industries grew in importance as towns replaced mining camps and trading centers.

Initial settlement for the mining camp was at the confluence of four ravines, Auburn Ravine, Rich Ravine, Little Baltimore Ravine and Crutcher Creek. Each ravine had creeks running through them. This portion of Auburn is currently called Old Town and contains many brick buildings dating back to 1855 that were hotels, businesses, a post office, fraternal halls, a hospital and residences. When the Central Pacific Railroad constructed the tracks through Auburn it ran along the ridge above the American River Canyon approximately one mile east of Old Town. East Auburn, as it was called, consisted of the railroad depot, hotels, a post office, businesses, schools and residences.

In August 1849, the first Alcalde (sheriff) of Auburn, Samuel Holladay, named the mining camp Auburn. The name Auburn came from the poem "The Deserted Village" by Oliver Goldsmith. The first line reads, "Sweet Auburn! The loveliest village of the plain...."

The town of Auburn grew to a city of over 1,300 residents by the census of 1850 and became the county seat for Sutter County in the new State of California in September of 1850. The following year the State created Placer County from portions of Sutter and Yuba counties with Auburn as the county seat for the new county.

Located at the intersection of early wagon roads and trails to the mines to the north, south and east, and the trade center of Sacramento to the west, Auburn became an important supply and transportation center. Trade intensified with the construction of the Sacramento, Placer & Nevada Railroad to within six miles of Auburn in 1862 and the completion of the Central Pacific Railroad to Auburn three years later.

The completion of the Central Pacific Railroad through Placer County, with a depot in Auburn, provided shipping to the east for the area's blossoming fruit and lumber industries. The railroad also brought tourism to Auburn. Families from San Francisco and Oakland came to the healthy climate of Auburn to spend a month or two from the 1870s through the 1930s.

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After the turn of the century when the automobile became popular, improvements on the old wagon roads gained support. By 1913 a movement to link former wagon roads as one great highway across America was touted by car and tire manufacturers, oil companies, and chambers of commerce. The location of a portion of the early California Overland Emigrant Trail, later Dutch Flat to Donner Lake Wagon Road, across the Sierra Nevada Mountains provided the foundation for the first transcontinental highway, the Lincoln Highway, through Auburn. The Victory Highway, constructed after World War I, used the same alignment as the Lincoln Highway through Auburn and Placer County. Construction of U.S. 40 in the 1920s led to a period of growth, as Auburn became a convenient service center for travelers making the trip across the Sierras. U.S. Highway 40 would follow almost the same alignment as the Lincoln Highway through the Auburn. Currently Interstate 80 runs through the same corridor sometimes on top of prior roads and in some places all four prior roads are evident in close proximity. The Central Pacific Railroad's Overland Route, later part of the Southern Pacific Railroad and still operated by Union Pacific Railroad, is also within close proximity of the highways through the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

In 1913 the Lincoln Highway was officially opened but was nothing more than existing roadways pieced together for 3,389 miles from Times Square, New York City, to Lincoln Park, San Francisco. The segment of the Lincoln Highway that ran through Placer County was aligned on portions of the old Henness Pass Toll Road, Dutch Flat- Donner Lake wagon road, and the Illinoistown and Auburn-Sacramento wagon roads.

By 1920 the Victory Highway, named as a memorial to the veterans of World War I, was the first cross- country road to be completed as a through route. This route followed the same course that the Lincoln Highway used through Placer County. "The Route of Triumph" extended for 3,205 miles from Atlantic City to San Francisco. To increase tourism in northern California the California State Automobile Association launched an aggressive campaign to promote the Victory Highway. In 1921 the Federal Aid Road Act named the highway as a primary road that provided \$2 million for improvements. The Victory Highway was completed on June 25, 1927.

In September of 1925, several highways were designated for the new numbering system with the "U.S." This new highway marking system would not take effect for some time because of the expense of signing. The section of road from the state line through Truckee, Auburn, Roseville, Sacramento and Davis to Oakland was recommended for the new numbering system. By the time the U.S. 40 designation was made a new route along the Truckee River was constructed. In November 1947, the new divided U.S. Highway

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40 was completed through Auburn. The new highway bypassed the business districts of Auburn. It skirted along Auburn Ravine, cutting through residential streets.

In 1964 Interstate 80, a four-lane freeway was completed following much the same alignment as U.S. 40 through Placer County.

Agriculture soon became the real gold of Placer County as settlers realized the area had ideal soil and climate for fruits and grains. As mining dwindled the thousands of miles of ditches constructed to supply water for hydraulic and drift mines were extended and used for agriculture. Fruit orchards and ranching flourished in the foothills and valley.

The rolling hills of western Placer County and the mild climate provided ideal conditions for raising grain and livestock. By 1855 many ranches of 320 to 640 acres grew wheat and barley. Sheep and cattle ranches between 700 and 50,000 acres were established in the mid-1850s. Ranchers wintered their livestock on these lower elevation ranches and during the summer months moved the herds up to graze in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Fruit orchards in Placer County began in the spring of 1846 with a few peach pits planted in the bottomland of the Bear River on Theodore Sicard's ranch. He then planted a variety of seeds and 200 grape cuttings brought from Mission San Jose (south of San Francisco) in 1848. From Illinoistown and Iowa Hill in the foothills to Lincoln and Roseville in the Sacramento Valley, Placer County pioneers cleared land to plant vineyards and orchards. By 1870, grapevines in the county numbered 813,514.

The completion of the Central Pacific Railroad from San Francisco to meet the Union Pacific in Promontory Point, Utah in 1869 opened markets to the east for Placer County's fruit industry. The refrigerated rail car was one of the most important innovations of the 1880s for the fruit industry. The refrigerated rail car and the Sierra Nevada ice industry made it possible to make larger shipments to more distant markets.

In 1886 Sacramento held a Citrus Fair where scores of local growers submitted entries. Placer County's fruit captured five of the ten top awards including first and second places. Newcastle, Auburn, Bowman, Loomis, and Penryn all enjoy the climate of the lower Sierra foothills where a temperate belt extended between the Sacramento Valley

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and elevations of 3,000 feet. Many fruits ripened earlier than in other areas and thus earned higher market prices. The conditions of the region also produced superior quality fruits. Placer County produced pears, peaches, plums, apples, nectarines, apricots, grapes, cherries, figs, quinces, pomegranates, melons, oranges, lemons, various nuts and berries and olives. Local cooperatives were formed, such as the Auburn Fruit Exchange, Newcastle Fruit Exchange, and Colfax Fruit Exchange, affiliates of the huge California Fruit Exchange that remains a world model. Placer County was the leading shipper of deciduous fruits in California by the 1880s.

Over 28,000 acres of orchards and vineyards were in Placer County by 1946. This rural county was built by men and women who worked long hard hours to clear land, plant trees and vines, pick the fruit, package and ship the fruit to stores all around the nation.

The timber industry, like agriculture, developed with mining. Logging developed in three stages. During the first stage, 1850-1867, mills provided lumber primarily for mines and construction. The second stage, 1864-70, provided timbers for railroad ties and snowsheds for the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad. The third stage provided lumber for general construction and boxes for shipping fruit.

Sawmills operated around early mining communities and were economically tied to the production of the mines in the area. As the mines of an area panned out the logging operation and mills would move near another mining community. Construction of the railroad through the county required an enormous amount of timber. Logging operations centered along the railroad corridor supplied timbers for construction and cordwood for the locomotives. The completion of the railroad offered transportation of lumber products, including lumber, shingles, and boxes for shipping fruit, to the east and to markets in the Central Valley and San Francisco. Logging continued to be a viable industry in Placer County until the 1990s.

As early as the 1860s the tourism industry began in Placer County. Hunting and fishing resorts attracted prosperous businessmen. Excursion trains from San Francisco and Oakland brought tourists to the healthy climate of the foothills and mountains. Resorts and hotels in Auburn catered to the tourists with special entertainment such as recitals, poetry readings and vignettes.

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The automobile prompted new types of resorts: the auto court and public campgrounds. These resorts offered swimming, dances, campfire programs and hiking. Resorts were scattered along the Lincoln/Victory Highway and later U.S. 40.

During the winter months skiing brought tourists first on ski trains from San Francisco and Oakland and later on the "all weather Highway 40." In the 1930s world downhill and jumping competitions were held on Red Mountain near Cisco and near Lake Tahoe. Skiers on their way up to the mountain ski resorts stopped at Auburn to spend the night as the trip from auburn to Tahoe-Reno could take more than four hours on Highway 40.

In 1960 the Winter Olympics was held at Squaw Valley giving the ski industry of the area a considerable boost. Much of the four lane Interstate 80 was completed to accommodate the large crowds for the Olympics although construction was not completed in the Kingvale-Cisco area until 1964.

Auburn businessmen began a campaign in the early 1950s for the 1960 Winter Olympics. With that came the campaign to make Auburn a place for visiting tourist to stop and spend time and of course, money. The move was on to restore the Gold Rush appearance to Old Auburn. This was spearheaded by the Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce restoration committee. At the same time they were encouraging the uptown merchants to spruce up their businesses. Many stores were repaired and repainted at both ends of town. Along Lincoln Way in the uptown business district new awnings were installed to replace the old ones, new brick facades were added or replaced, and new paint applied to stucco and wood buildings.

In 1970 Old Auburn Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district includes the, "city blocks in the vicinity of Maple Street, Commercial Street, Court Street, Lincoln Way, Washington Street, Spring Street, and Sacramento Street." Historic resources listed are: Placer County Courthouse, Travelers' Rest and Winery (now Bernhard Museum Complex), Lawyers Row, Commerical Street stores (six buildings), Chinese Joss House, and the Old U.S. Post Office. Since the time of this listing the utility poles have been undergrounded.

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A historic resources survey was completed for Auburn in 1987. The survey inventoried 547 properties. The decision to include the large number of properties greatly diminished the research on the individual buildings. While some buildings have inaccurate information or completely lacking, others are complete and accurate.

**Clarification of Names Used for Auburn Neighborhoods**

The mining camp of Auburn was located on the convergence of the ravines. It was earlier known as North Fork Dry Diggings because of the North Fork of the American River. For a short time it was also known as Woods Dry Diggings named for one of the Mexican War Stevenson's Regiment soldiers that were here. By 1849 it was named Auburn. When the railroad came through in 1865 on the hill one mile to the east of Auburn businesses began to move closer to the railroad depot. That portion of Auburn became known as East Auburn. In the 1920s East Auburn was known as Auburn and the old mining town portion known as downtown Auburn. In the 1930s the two areas were known as uptown Auburn and lower Auburn. With the campaign to restore the Gold Rush appearance in the 1950s lower Auburn became Old Town and uptown Auburn remained the newer business district. In the 1970s with the influx of people from Los Angeles and the Bay Area uptown became known as downtown Auburn and Old Town remains. The two portions of town were connected in the middle by Central Square where Lincoln Way and High Street crossed and Lewis Street converged. This square united the two business districts and the name remains the same since 1900. In this document the author has tried to be consistent by using the terms Old Town and East or uptown Auburn.

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**Gold Rush Settlement 1848-1865**

This era saw the flood of emigration into California, settlements in the foothills and development of cities on the waterways of California, establishment of state and local governments, the court system, hospitals and schools. Californians drafted and ratified a constitution. The mining industry flourished, the first transcontinental railroad reached Auburn, and two courthouses were constructed in Auburn.

Claude Chana, a Frenchman, came to California to Sigard's rancho on the Bear River in 1846. In the spring of 1847 he went to Sutter's Fort and worked there as a cooper. There he worked closely with James Marshall, the wagon maker. After seven months at the fort he returned to Sigard's rancho. Sigard's rancho became a rendezvous for French fur trappers and mountain men in the area.

During that winter on January 24, 1848, Marshall discovered gold on the American River near the Maidu Indian village of Koloma where he was constructing a lumber mill for John A. Sutter. News of the discovery reached Sigard's rancho in early spring. Chana left the first week of May to visit Marshall and enquire about the discovery. He traveled to Sutter's Fort where he found Sam Brannan and another man who were also going to see Marshall. The three men traveled from Sutter's Fort up the South Fork of the American River by way of Mormon Island to Coloma. There he found people digging for gold with tin and wooden plates. He returned to the rancho by the same route in order to gather an outfit together to return to Coloma and search for gold.

Francois Gendron, a voyager, who had been west of the Rocky Mountains since 1832; Philibert Courteau, who came to California with Fremont in 1843-43; another Frenchman named Eugene; and twenty-five Indians formed the party to go search for gold. They cut down a tree on the bank of the Bear River and used the wood to make bateas (wooden pans) to pan for gold. With thirty-five horses the party traveled a route that Gendron pioneered through what would become Auburn Ravine. While camped on the Auburn Ravine Chana decided to try to pan for gold. He found three 'considerable sized pieces of yellow gold.' They stayed for three weeks and found three pounds of gold. Then they heard that gold had been discovered on the Yuba River northwest of Sigard's Ranch so they headed for the Yuba where eventually Chana found \$25,000 worth of gold.

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The population of California increased rapidly after President Polk announced the gold discovery in December of 1848. An estimated 14,000 immigrants arrived in the summer of 1849 and by the end of 1849 the state's population swelled to nearly 100,000. The population census for 1852 contains the best information on the early population of Placer County. By that year Placer County had a population of 10,784. The two largest groups were United States citizens and Chinese followed by Europeans. A breakdown of this diversity is found in the following chart:

**Chart A: Placer County Ethnic Population, 1852**

<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Number of Residents</b>
United States of America	5166
British Provinces and Canada	80
Mexico	52
Central America	6
Peru	11
Chili	39
Brazil	3
Cuba	3
England and Wales	338
Scotland	126
Ireland	421
France	94
German States	327
Poland	5
Russia	3
Denmark	19
Norway and Sweden	62
Holland	1
Spain	14
Portuguese and West Islands	70
Italy and Sicily	19
Greece	7
Hungary	2
Switzerland	21
Australian British Possessions	18
At Sea	2
Not Specific and Refused to Answer	31
China	3019
Sandwich Island (omitted Kanakas)	15

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**Totals:**

U.S.-born Anglos	5166
Blacks/Mulattoes	90
Europe and Canada	1609
Central America (including Mexico & Cuba)	61
South America	43
Australia	18
China	3019
Sandwich Islands	15
American Indian	730
At Sea, Not Specific or Refused to Answer	33
<b>Total Population:</b>	<b>10784</b>

The largest number of these people worked as miners. All of these groups figured prominently in Placer County and references to the various groups are found in the county histories, contemporary newspapers, and government documents.

Miners searched for their fortunes all along the American River and its tributaries. When word about the latest strike came to the camps the young men would swarm like locusts to the next location. Mining camps dotted the river bars along the American River. Permanent settlements were usually located on higher ground and where trails and roads to other camps crossed. Auburn is one of these settlements.

The mining camp that resulted from Chana’s discovery was for a short time known as North Fork Dry Diggings and as Woods Dry Diggings, named for John S. Wood who served in Stevenson’s Regiment in the Mexican War who mined in the area. In August 1849, the first Alcalde (sheriff) of Auburn, Samuel Holladay, suggested the name Auburn. The name Auburn came from the poem “The Deserted Village” by Oliver Goldsmith. The first line reads, “Sweet Auburn! The loveliest village of the plain....”

The mining town of Auburn is situated where three ravines converge-- Auburn Ravine that runs east to west on the north edge of town (now the alignment of Interstate 80), Rich Ravine that runs south to north on the south portion of town,

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and Little Baltimore Ravine that runs from the northeast until it merges with Rich Ravine under Sacramento Street near the Old Town Post Office. Rich Ravine meets Auburn Ravine near present day Interstate 80 at the northwest edge of old town Auburn.

Miners pitched tents along the ravines and with pans, knives, and spoons, and rockers hunted for gold. They built cabins along the ravines near their diggings and when pack animals and wagons came into the mining camp roads rambled along the irregular trails skirting the ravines. These became the wagon roads and later the streets of the town.

As mining changed from a single man, or small group of men, working diggings to the large- scale operations employing many men and financed by companies in San Francisco, New York, and London, stable towns with churches and schools replaced the earlier temporary tent camps. Many who came to seek their fortunes in gold fell back on the skills brought from home such as agriculture, merchandising, teaching, banking, and law. Merchants rapidly replaced the temporary structures with wooden frame buildings for their businesses and residences. In 1850 the U. S. Census reported 1,300 people in Auburn.

With California statehood in September of 1850, Auburn became the county seat for Sutter County. Little more than seven months later, Placer County, created from portions of Sutter and Yuba counties, was established on April 28, 1851, with Auburn as county seat as it continues today. The Act that provided for the organization of the county named the following offices to be elected; one County Judge, one District Attorney, one County Clerk, one Sheriff, one County Surveyor, one Assessor, one Coroner and one Treasurer. The State Legislature appointed a Board of Commissioners to oversee and appoint Inspectors of Election.

The elected officials for the new county set up office in the old Sutter County courthouse in Auburn on Court Street. The canvas and wood building held the offices and a log jail was located behind the courthouse.

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The *Placer Times and Transcript*, an early Sacramento newspaper, reported on September 15, 1851, the following:

Auburn is one of the oldest mining towns in the State. It is the seat of justice for Placer County, and is situated on the West bank of the North Fork of the American River, within three miles of the junction of the Middle and North Fork. The streets and town lots of the settlement have been considerably dug over for gold and in many instances houses have been undermined for the same object. At present it is the principle trading point for the large number of miners congregated at Horse Shoe Bar, Smith's Bar, and the less important mining locations for miles up and down the North Fork of the, as well as for a wide expanse of country on all sides, which abounds in dry diggings.

The *Placer Herald* reported in its second issue, September 18, 1852, the following about the town:

AUBURN,--The county seat, situated on the big or Auburn Ravine, and within about one mile of the North Fork of the American River, and four miles below the junction of the Middle and North Forks and six miles south of Bear River. This is a flourishing town, and is among the oldest in the northern mines. It was first located in the early part of the summer of 1849. Like most towns which at that time sprung into existence, neither taste in the order of architecture or regularity in laying it out, seems to have been consulted. The past year, however, has materially changed its appearance. A few log cabins first erected still remain, but they are rapidly giving place to commodious farm buildings. From a cluster of log houses it has been converted, by the enterprise of its citizens, into a flourishing and not unsightly town. Its hotels the Empire, National, Crescent, Auburn House and others, under the superintendence of gentlemen of experience, are admirably conducted, and afford accommodations equal to any in the State. The National is being enlarged and elegantly refitted, and a large and commodious structure has been erected upon the site of the old Empire. This new building is to be finished and furnished in a style creditable to the enterprise of its proprietor. No town in the State furnished greater facilities for communication with its

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ighbors. Three stages arrive and depart each day for Sacramento, one for Marysville, one for Grass Valley and Nevada, one for Yankee Jims, and one for Illinoistown, and all are doing a flourishing business. One of the Sacramento lines carries a tri-weekly mail, which the wants of the county demand should be increased to a daily. Each of the Expresses, Adams & Co., Wells, Fargo & Co., and Gregory, have an office in Auburn,. The Bear River Auburn Water and Mining Co., office is also in this place. The Herculean labor of constructing a canal about fifty miles in length, through which to conduct the water of Bear River into the rich and extensive placer diggings in this vicinity, was undertaken more than a year ago, and is now nearly completed. It is to be hoped that this company, which has surmounted so many and great obstacles in carrying on and completing the work, and from which the mines of the country will undoubtedly derive great benefit, may reap a rich reward for their enterprise and public spirit. A large amount of stock in the Electric Telegraph about to be established in the State has been taken by our citizens, and an office will be established as soon as the line is completed to this place. A line of railroad from Sacramento to Nevada by way of Auburn is in contemplation. Should it be constructed, which we believe sooner or later it must be, Auburn will become one of the largest inland cities in the State.

Of the mines in this vicinity it is scarcely necessary to speak.- The vast yield of gold from the placers, the extent of country through which it is distributed, the success of the miners in the dry diggings and upon the ravines in its vicinity, since the discovery of gold in this country, has given them a reputation second to none in California.”

Auburn had its share of conflagrations during the early years. In November 1852, a group of volunteers created Auburn Hook and Ladder Company with a total of \$70.00. Fires from 1855 to 1872 kept them busy. The damage of theses fires totaled \$537,675.

The first of a series of fires, and the most devastating, started the Chinese section of town on Sacramento Street on June 4, 1855. It burned down the street and into the central business district destroying eighty buildings in an hour and one half. The *Placer Herald* reported, “The town has gone, what of that! In

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twelve months we will have a prettier and much better one.” H.T. Holmes, local merchant and lime kiln owner, advertised in the same paper, “Lime! To those who intend to erect brick buildings. I have on hand and can supply any quantity of Lime of the best quality, and at very low rates.”

Construction on new ‘fireproof’ brick buildings in the center of Main (now Lincoln Way) and Washington Streets had begun the week before the fire. The three buildings were constructed in the area that was known as the Plaza prior to their construction and would later be called the James Block. Another fire burned a portion of town in October of 1859. This fire started on Washington Street and burned both sides of the street and spread both north and south through the Chinese section of town. Wooden structures that survived this fire were the William McDaniel house, built the previous year, and Traveler’s Rest (now the Bernhard Museum Complex), a waystation on the Sacramento Folsom Road constructed in 1851. The buildings left standing, or where the fire stopped, were the ‘fireproof’ brick buildings. Within the week two business owners contracted with the local brickyard to construct new buildings. By 1865 a majority of the commercial buildings in the central part of town were constructed of brick. Brick buildings lined Commercial Street, Sacramento Street, Lincoln Way and Washington Street.

The town continued as an important supply center for the mines on the Foresthill Divide, Iowa Hill Divide, along the American River, northern El Dorado County, Illinoistown, Dutch Flat, Grass Valley and Nevada City. The town bustled with freighters and stages hauling supplies, mail, and people to and from Sacramento and San Francisco daily. The large Chinese section of town, along Sacramento Street, supplied the Chinese miners with goods from China.

As placer mining panned out in the ravines, mining companies formed by men in San Francisco, New York and London, invested their capitol in quartz mines in the area. Mines close to Auburn that employed a large number of men included: the St. Patrick, Bellevue, Green, Orleans, St. Lawrence and Julian mines.

Before the Gold Rush agriculture in the form of grain crops waved with the breeze and were harvested in western Placer County. As early as 1845 Theodore Sicard planted and harvested the first wheat grown in the county on his

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ranch located south of the Bear River. Claude Chana, who came to California in 1846, discovered the region's potential for growing wheat and fruit crops. He planted peach pits and almonds as an experiment on Sigard's ranch before he discovered gold in the Auburn Ravine in 1848. Chana and Sigard created the first orchard of peaches, apples, and pears, almonds, and grapes.

The fertile foothills proved to be an excellent climate for fruit of all kinds. Peaches, apples and grapes were in abundance and shipped to local markets. Early growers tried silkworms, cork trees and other exotic fruits.

January 8, 1863 work began on the Central Pacific Railroad in Sacramento with a ceremony of the first throwing of earth on the banks of the Sacramento River. The railroad was to meet with the Union Pacific working from the east to become the first transcontinental railroad in the country. In June of 1864 the track reached Newcastle, just a few miles west of Auburn. Late in the year the construction crew reached a rocky hill on the Bloomer Ranch where they had to blast a cut 800 feet long and 85 feet deep. Once Bloomer Cut (where every foot had to be cleared with black powder) was complete trains were finally able to come into Auburn on May 13, 1865. The tracks skirted around the town of Auburn about one mile on the hills to the south and east. The depot was constructed on the eastern side. The railroad would bring greater shipping opportunities for Auburn but it would shift the commercial center from the old mining town one mile east to East or Uptown Auburn.

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**Community Development 1865-1930**

1865 brought major improvements in transportation that provided an impetus for commercial development in new East Auburn. The completion of the railroad to Auburn shifted commerce from the ravines of Old Town Auburn to the hilltop of East Auburn (later known as uptown), mining declined, while agriculture and lumber industries blossomed. Transportation by train and later by automobile on the Lincoln Highway (later U.S. Highway 40) and Highway 49 gained importance. Auburn situated on the major transcontinental transportation corridor through the rugged Sierra Nevada Mountains was poised for expansion and development.

The first trains of the Central Pacific Railroad arrived in Auburn on May 13, 1865. The depot was built approximately one mile east of the Gold Rush town. This began the development of the new commercial and residential section of East Auburn. Hotels were the first buildings constructed along the railroad tracks near the depot. Lumber sheds, fruit shipping sheds, grain storage sheds, and an ice house were built along the tracks. Livery stables, boarding houses, mercantile stores, drug stores, harness and saddle shops, and a post office along with residences were constructed along east end of Railroad Ave (Lincoln Way) and High Street.

The move to East Auburn meant a more stable, progressive community, larger buildings, and wider straight streets. Many businesses abandoned the old town mining camp and moved uptown while some expanded with businesses in both locations. The town was almost two separate towns almost a mile apart.

By the turn of the century Central Pacific Railroad was running so many trains over Donner Summit that they concluded to put in another track so that one track was designated for eastbound trains and the other for westbound. In 1909 construction began on a new Central Pacific Railroad track through of Auburn for the uphill east bound trains. Recalling the difficulty of cutting through the conglomerate rock at Bloomer Cut they found another route that went northwest from Newcastle and skirted the west side of Auburn then met up with the old track at Bowman where they ran parallel on over Donner Summit.

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## Economic Development

Auburn, a rural community, depended on three major industries through the years: Mining, agriculture, and lumber. Auburn was the regional center of commerce for these industries. Transportation was key for all three. Auburn is situated in a transcontinental transportation corridor ideal for shipping finished products. The transportation corridor also allowed for tourism and recreation opportunities.

## Mining

Mining, during this period although a declining industry, still played a major economic role in Auburn. Miners and mining companies of the outlying areas still traded and many did their banking in Auburn. A total of \$6,425,000 in gold was produced by the mines of the Gold Run District between 1865 and 1877. A small mining boom took place in 1915-1916. One reporter exclaimed, "Rich channels in some of oldest mines being struck and 'work rushing'." Another article reported about rich gravel (gold-bearing) being panned during current construction, but now halted. "In the early days Auburn Ravine was one of the richest mining camps in the State. Ten feet constituted a claim in those days, and fabulous wealth was taken out."

By the 1920s the high cost of powder, steel and insurance coupled with the low price of gold made the profit margin small. This struggle would continue until President Franklin Delano Roosevelt fixed the price of gold. In the 1930s articles appeared in the newspapers about individuals like G.H. Bisbee who makes, "rich strike on Paradise property near Foresthill. Total of \$1,000 taken out of seam in one week." Articles like these attracted Depression Era placer mining that took place along the American River and many unemployed families camped along the river to scrape out a living.

Several hardrock mines in the Ophir area some four miles from Auburn worked until World War II. These mines were owned by mostly absentee corporations. However they employed large numbers of men in the mines. The mines were closed at the beginning of World War II and did not reopen.

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**Agriculture**

From the 1850s through the 1870s the fruit industry was fairly dormant. Early orchardists planted trees too close together causing lack of sun for the fruit to develop and ripen. Also the shifting population to the latest gold strike in other parts of California, Nevada, and Australia caused a decline in the market dropping prices. Many early orchards were sold before they produced as their owners moved on to better prospects.

The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, then the Wright Irrigation Act of 1887, that clarified the state water laws, each proved a boon for the growing fruit industry. The climate of the Auburn area was excellent for fruit production. The railroad provided convenient fast shipping to not only the California markets but also markets in the East. Complex water conveyance systems created from placer and hydraulic mining were extended from the mountains to the foothills to provide irrigation for agriculture.

Major crops in the 1860s included: peach, apple, pear, plum, cherry, nectarine, quince, apricot, prune, fig, lemon, orange, and pomegranate. Wine grapes and olive trees to produce oil were also planted in the 1870s. Over 1 million pounds (40 train carloads) of fruit was shipped by rail in ventilated cars in 1879, much of the fruit spoiled by the time it reached the market.

Auburn's surrounding hillsides were covered with fruit trees and vineyards by the 1880s. The orange and olive in the mid 1880s were so prevalent that two streets in town were named for them (Orange and Olive Streets near the high school) and the original colors for the Placer County High School were olive and orange, later changed to green and gold.

Improvements on rail cars for shipping fruit and using ice from the ice companies that harvested natural ice located in the Sierra Nevada Mountains along the railroad route allowed transport of the fruit with much better success. On June 24, 1886 the first fruit train of fresh fruit across the continent passed through Auburn. It consisted of fifteen cars—fourteen with fruit and the other with vegetables from the Sacramento region. The train was draped with banners and flags. The children of Auburn thought it to be a circus train when they first saw it. This marked the beginning of a new era for the fruit industry.

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By 1888 new refrigerator cars, cooled with natural ice harvested at Boca, California, near Truckee, were used to ship fruit to the eastern markets. In the 1890s manufactured ice competed with the Truckee ice companies. A. W. Kenison Company and Auburn Consumer's Ice, Cold Storage and Fuel Company were the two earliest manufactured ice companies in Placer County.

Placer County fruit won many prizes in early state Citrus Fairs in held in Sacramento, Marysville, Oroville, and in Los Angeles. In 1892 Auburn hosted the Citrus Fair in the Auburn Opera House in Central Square. A special train from Sacramento ran daily for fairgoers. By the turn of the century citrus fruit declined in the area as the deciduous fruit industry increased.

In 1895 Southern Pacific railroad and Armour Meat Co of Chicago built refrigerator cars that could be re-iced along the RR route. Refrigerator cars were iced in Roseville, Auburn and Truckee along the route in California.

Also important to the fruit industry was a supply of water. Frederick Birdsall, an Auburn businessman and olive orchard owner, bought, improved and expanded the Bear River, Auburn, and Gold Hill Ditch Companies to supply water to Clipper Gap, Auburn, Newcastle and Penryn. These original ditch companies constructed the ditches from the rivers and streams in the mountains and developed a system of ditches and reservoirs to divert water to mining operations lower in the foothills. As the mining operations declines Birdsall saw the opportunity to use the water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

Placer County was the leading shipper of deciduous fruits in California by the 1880s. Local cooperatives were formed such as the Auburn Fruit Exchange, an affiliate of the California Fruit Exchange that remains as a world model.

On October 23, 1915 local orchardists met at the Freeman Hotel in Auburn to discuss a growers' cooperative. These men were rugged individuals who planted, irrigated and cultivated their orchards. When it came time to harvest their fruit they had to pack it to be shipped and then market their product. A growers' cooperative operated a central packing shed, hired a manager to run the operation and handled the marketing.

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Attending that first meeting at the Freeman Hotel were, J.A. Teagarden, A.F. Wortman, J.H. Andregg, C.C. Bean, Thomas Shanley, M.W. Ammon and A.L. Teagarden. (Some of these names may be recognized by local road names.) The Auburn Fruit Exchange, created that night, joined already established growers associations in Newcastle, Penryn, Loomis and Placerville. These were the first members of the California Fresh Fruit Exchange of 1901 and reorganized in 1907 as the California Fruit Exchange. The California Fruit Exchange acted as the central marketing headquarters, found buyers and made sales for the local exchanges and provided financing.

The California Fruit Exchange offered a loan to build the shipping house for the Auburn Fruit Exchange near the Nevada Street Depot on the eastbound track. Prior to the formation of the Auburn Fruit Exchange growers had to haul their fruit about five miles to Newcastle to be shipped by the Newcastle Fruit Exchange. Three more fruit packing and shipping companies were operating near the depot on Nevada Street by the 1920s. Nothing remains of these once thriving operations.

Placer County always proud of their fruit won 10 first prizes, 17 second prizes and 3 third for fruit at the state fair in 1919. During the 1920s changes in the industry saw the move from ranch packing to house packing. Individual fruit ranchers did not pack their fruit for shipping on their ranches; instead they transported the fruit to the fruit houses where they were packed for shipping. This allowed for standardization of the quality of the fruit and the boxes.

In 1922 Placer County shipped 3,000 cars of fruit. The fruit industry was booming. In 1924 the *Placer Herald* newspaper compared the gold and fruit industries. Gold in the 1850s produced is estimated at \$7,000,000. In 1923 deciduous fruit shipped \$6,000,000. That is 5,000 carloads a season a carload equals 26,000 pounds, or 13 tons, which makes approx 100 train loads. The carloads combined into one train would string 50 miles. Placer County shipped one-fourth of all deciduous fruit east from California that year.

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**Lumber**

The history of logging in Placer County can be divided into three periods: logging for mining and construction of buildings; railroad construction; and fruit boxes and post World War II housing. Logging operations were located on the Foresthill Divide east of Auburn between the North and Middle Forks of the American River and east of Auburn along the west slope of the Sierra Nevada along the current Interstate 80 corridor. Logs and lumber were shipped first by wagons and later by logging trucks down the mountain to Auburn where they were milled and shipped to markets throughout the country.

The first sawmills were small mills associated with gold rush mining camps that produced lumber for local demand. Eleven sawmills were in operation on the Foresthill Divide in Sierra Nevada east of Auburn in the 1850s. Lumber manufactured in these sawmills was freighted down to Auburn in wagons. With the building of the Central Pacific Railroad, lumber could be more easily shipped by rail car.

In the 1870s, Samuel Putnam of Auburn owned a sawmill near Emigrant Gap. He built a planing mill and box factory in Auburn, as a way to add value to his rough cut lumber and then sell the high valued product to a larger market. His manufacturing complex was located between Linden and Cherry Avenues, on the west side of the railroad tracks, in Auburn.

By 1876, due to the decline in mining in the area, only five mills were in operation and by 1910 only one mill was operating on the Foresthill Divide. In the late 1890s, area lumber firms, such as Towle Bros. Company set up retail lumber yards to sell their products. Auburn Lumber Company was one such outlet, originally owned by Towle Bros. Company, purchased by their nephew Edwin Towle Robie in 1902. Auburn Lumber Company was located next to the railroad depot in East Auburn. Many of the buildings remain along side the railroad tracks.

Lardner's planing mill, located the corner of Linden Ave and Lewis Place, operated during the 1920s.

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**Ethnic Groups**

The Nisenan Indians, also known as southern Maidu, called the Auburn area home prior to the Gold Rush. Small family groups, or tribelets, moved seasonally from the foothills to the mountain meadows and along streams. Families had specific areas where they returned each year to hunt, and harvest seeds, roots, acorns, and to prune and care for plants. They established small villages along the streams and rivers. One village near Rocklin, approximately fifteen miles west of Auburn, had 69 house flats. This appears to be an unusually large village for the foothills

Two celebrations, "Big Times" and the "Spring or Flower Dance," marked the coming of fall and spring. Messengers were sent to villages and camps to announce the day of the celebration. At these two times the people gathered from all around. These social gatherings consisted of ceremonial dancing, ball games, gambling, and provided a time for the renewal of friendships and meeting potential mates.

The Gold Rush forever changed the lives of the Nesinan. The survivors lived on the periphery subsisting as they could. Many women and girls became domestics and some married miners. The men worked doing whatever they could, usually sporadically.

In 1909 the local Nesinan were given land for a Rancheria by the Federal government in the southwestern area of Auburn. The Auburn Indian Rancheria was established in 1916. In 1942 Bing Crosby purchased land for the tribe off Maidu Road in southwestern Auburn that had been used as burial grounds by the Nesinan prior to the 1860s. The United Auburn Indian Community maintains the cemetery and currently has their school and church near the rancheria land where several families continue to live.

In 2008 members of the tribe on the official rolls number approximately 160 adults. They built a very successful casino and resort in Lincoln and have purchased land near Camp Far West for homes and a cultural center. The tribe established a private tribal school in 2004 for preschool through high school that is state of the art.

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Several ethnic groups immigrated to Placer County between the 1880s and 1950s for the outstanding agricultural conditions. The Chinese, Japanese, and Portuguese are three of these groups who have left a footprint on the community.

Chinese miners first settled in the Auburn area in the 1850s. William McDaniel, a gold seeker from Virginia, became a merchant on Sacramento Street. He and his wife and children settled in Auburn. He constructed fifteen buildings along Sacramento Street that he rented to the Chinese who used them as both residences and stores. McDaniel constructed his home and store within the 'Chinese section' of town. His home was constructed in 1857 and is one of the very few early frame buildings remaining in Auburn.

McDaniel was well thought of by the Chinese community. The Placer Herald reported in 1859, "Our friend, William McDaniel of Auburn was presented in Saturday last, by his Chinese customers, with which he is justly quite popular as a merchant, with a fine silk banner bearing his own good name in Chinese characters. John (nomenclature for Chinese man), became curious about the Buchanan and Fillmore flags about town, and having been informed that we hoisted a flag for the man we liked best, in this country, he took the hint, and now Mc has the finest one of the lot floating from a flag staff, in front of his store. The presentation was the occasion of a big feast and other ceremonies among the Celestials. Success to our friend McDaniel." Two weeks later a Chinese miner not from the area killed McDaniel while he was working in his store. The Chinese community was outraged, caught the killer, and commissioned a head stone erected for McDaniel. The headstone, in both English and Chinese, is located in the Old Auburn District Cemetery.

It was at Auburn in 1865 that the Central Pacific Railroad first began hiring Chinese Americans for railroad construction. The Chinese American community in Auburn increased in size with the influx of railroad workers. The community has survived, along with two pioneering families, the Kee family and the Yue family. Charlie Yue is said to have been the first licensed Chinese American gold assayer in California.

The 1910 census lists approximately 64 Chinese living on Main and Sacramento Streets in Old Town. Their occupations are listed as: fruit farmer- 3; laundry- 5; vegetable peddler-3; groceries (store owners, bookkeepers)-7; laborer odd jobs-

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18; cook-4; barber-1; doctor-1; gardener-1; own income-4; and no occupation (wife or children)-10. The Yue family is listed with Charley Yue as a restaurant owner. The restaurant was the Shanghai Restaurant and Bar that was housed in the old American Hotel and operated by the family until 2006.

The population in the Chinese section remained the same in 1920, however there were fourteen listed as laborers on fruit ranches; five as hotel cooks; one hospital cook; two chauffeurs; three miners; one laundry owner; one barber; two restaurant owners; one merchant; and the rest wives and children. The homes and business buildings are still located on Lincoln Way (renamed from Main Street due to the Lincoln Highway) and Sacramento Street. Also listed on this census are three Japanese families including the Tsuda family, living on Sacramento Street and owners of a general store.

The majority of the Chinese Americans living in Auburn at this time were single men boarding in the two boarding houses. In 1922 the Ling Ying Association House, similar to a fraternal organization, was constructed to provide religious and educational needs. It is now known as the Joss House Museum located on the corner of Sacramento Street and Brewery Lane.

The Auburn Chinese Cemetery is a 2-1/2 acre site fenced site on Highway 49 in Auburn which still contains the eleven burials and large sacrificial burner. All other remains were removed either returned to China for burial or moved to a local cemetery for re-interment. It is owned and maintained by local Chinese American families.

Japanese first immigrated to the area in the 1890s following the pattern of the Chinese as contract laborers, tenant farmers and then land ownership. The Chinese cleared the land of rocks, brush and trees for orchards and crops prior to the turn of the century; however with large numbers of Japanese immigrating to the area they became the dominate laborers. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and strong anti-Chinese sentiment drove many Chinese out of the area where later the Japanese settled. In 1892, the first Japanese advertised in the *Placer Herald* newspaper for "Two experienced Japanese boys want situation in town or in the country to do cooking or any kind of work."

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Penryn, a small agricultural community located approximately five miles west of Auburn, became the hub of the Japanese community in Placer County and established a Buddhist Church there in 1911. By 1914 there were enough Japanese in Auburn to begin plans for a Buddhist Church in Auburn. In April, 1915, they had a founding ceremony to establish the church in Auburn. Services were held on a monthly basis as the church was affiliated with the Penryn Church. Katsuichi George Tsuda opened the first Japanese grocery store in Old Town. In 1926 he relocated his store so the Buddhist Church could use the building. The Church used the building until 1945 and at that time Tsuda's store moved back into the building and operated until 2006 when Frank Tsuda passed away. The building retains the name Tsuda's and is now a deli.

A third important ethnic group emigrated from the Azore Islands. Portuguese migration to Newcastle-Auburn area began in the 1870s through the 1920s although there were some Portuguese miners here as early as the 1850s. Many were laborers and tenant fruit ranchers until they were able to buy their own orchards. In Placer County the rural areas surrounding Auburn and Newcastle (approximately three miles west of Auburn) contained the largest population of Portuguese. Most emigrated from the Azore Islands and were naturalized between 1900 and 1959. The Portuguese families, generally devout Roman Catholics, were very active in St. Joseph's Catholic Church and St Joseph's Catholic School in Auburn. The Holy Ghost Festa, or Festa de Espirito Santo, was celebrated in Portugal since the 13<sup>th</sup> Century when Queen Isabel sold her jewelry to feed the poor during their time of intense poverty. She took her crown and scepter, symbols of power and authority, and put them on the heads of the poorest people in the land to show her humility and belief that all people were equal in God's eyes. She promoted the nobility and the general populace attend Mass and then have a common meal dedicated to the Holy Spirit. In California a young girl was crowned for her role as Festa Queen, aided by other young ladies dressed the role of maids in waiting. The Portuguese families in Auburn were active in the festa which still takes place in Lincoln in the park. The Newcastle Portuguese Hall is still the center of activities for their many organizations and is list on the National Register of Historic Places.

The fruit industry dominated rural Auburn, indeed the foothills of Placer County, from the 1880s through the 1960s: young and old, men and women, all ethnic groups, worked growing, picking, sorting, packing and transporting fruit.

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### Commercial Development

Ten years after the railroad arrived Auburn businesses were prospering and increasing. New buildings were erected and old ones repaired, and streets improved. The town boasted five hotels, two restaurants, two dry good stores, four groceries, two hardware stores, two variety stores, a livery stable, four blacksmith and wagon shops, one furniture store, one drug store, a bank, a harness shop, a meat market, saloons, barbers, tailors, and shoemakers. Other businesses included lawyers, physicians, a civil engineer, surveyor, freighters and teamsters, brewery, carpenters, water company, newspapers, teachers, tool road owner, post office and churches.

In the 1870s Elliot West, who was a pioneer hotel man at the railroad depot, secured the right of way and opened what was first known as Railroad Street (now Lincoln Way). Prior to that time wagons had to haul their freight up High Street and make a hard uphill turn onto the road paralleling the railroad tracks. Railroad Street allowed a straight road from Old Town to the railroad depot.

By 1880 the population was estimated at 1,500. Five years later the population had grown to 2,500. The new commercial and residential section of town stretched up Lincoln Way from the Courthouse to the railroad depot (then Broad Street on the west end and Railroad Street on the east end) and along the east end of High Street. By 1890, there were four hotels, a livery stable, a lumber yard, fruit shipping house, hardware store, flour and grain warehouse, ice house, bowling alley, bakery, fire station, a general supply store, newspaper office and numerous residences. Auburn was famed as a health resort at this time. Hotels were kept full with visitors seeking the healthy climate.

In 1896 the Auburn Drug Store opened in its current location. At the turn of the century construction both for commercial and residential buildings boomed. Between Central Square and the railroad on Lincoln Way the Hink Block in 1905 and the Placer County Bank building and Hotel Auburn 1913 were constructed.

Residential subdivisions such as, College Heights, Prospect Hill, Linden Heights, Hale Tract, Huntley Tract, and Aeolia Heights were developed. Pine and East streets were opened with houses constructed along them. Street lights, concrete sidewalks, and a sewer system had been installed. Many private residences had

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electric lights. The new County Hospital was being built. The Catholic, Episcopal, Congregational and Baptist churches were all built between 1893 and 1911.

A visitor to Auburn after an absence of twenty years reported in the *Placer County Republican* that, "Lawns were the rarest exception, this being due to more than one cause. However, one may be mentioned—the town possessed a number of such intelligent bovine creatures, that no gate however intricate the fastening, was proof against their efforts, and the dreaded 'midnight marauder' was of that class. As is generally understood, gardens and grass plots so not flourish where cattle roam the streets. The condition is changed, and smooth lawns and well cultivated gardens are the rule, while fences are low and gates simple, for the stock are not turned loose upon our streets."

The visitor went on to talk about the changes in the people he knew. "The boys have grown up and I scarcely know my old acquaintances....I thought the boys had caught the Southern California fever and gone south, but I find they are here and prospering. They are not rushing around frantically about, trying to make false sales, while their shabby clothes belie their wonderful stories about fortunes made in real estate. They are attending to legitimate business, living generously, yet keeping within their incomes."

The businessmen of Auburn were busy during the next twenty years promoting Auburn. The Auburn Area Chamber of Commerce, organized in 1905, began campaigning to promote Auburn both the business community and as a place to live. The Auburn Improvement Club began in 1911.

As the automobile became more popular over taking stage and train travel, road improvements dominated discussions of local leaders. The Auburn Commercial Club was organized in 1918. The mission of the commercial club was to promote tourism. They found sites for 'auto camping,' encouraged residents to plant trees, and were boosters for highway improvements. A year later the Auburn to Verdi First Association was formed to promote highway improvements from Auburn to Verdi, Nevada.

Local politician, Ivan T. Parker, introduced a bill for a Mother Lode Highway that would become Highway 49. The bill passed in June of 1921. Early in 1922 the

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American Highway Association met with the Auburn Chamber of Commerce. In May the American Highway Association announced that they would raise one billion dollars by public subscription to pave five transcontinental highways.

The businessmen's campaigning resulted in the Governor's Road Committee meeting with the Placer County Board of Supervisors in 1924 and a request from Cornelius Vanderbilt regarding for information on the condition of the road over Donner Summit.

This was good news for the Auburn businessmen as Auburn was the only major town between Sacramento and Reno. Large portions of the Lincoln Highway over the summit were not paved. The automobile allowed for freedom of travel and shopping. At this time 4,000 cars were registered in Placer County and Auburn merchants began a "Trade at Home" campaign.

Building and new businesses continued through the decade in Auburn. In 1925 the total amount reported with building permits equaled \$120,000. During this decade new businesses opened: Burns Drug Store, J.C. Penney, Montgomery Wards, Central California Building and Loan, Bank of America and AAA. The new Placer High School was dedicated, with an enrollment of 400, and plans were made for a new post office.

### **Public Institutions**

In order to understand the history of Auburn it is helpful to look at the development of its institutions. Government, both county and city, fire stations, schools, library, churches, and fraternal organizations demonstrate how the community was organized. During this period the community experienced constant growth in population and in the booming agriculture and lumber industries.

When California became a state, in 1850, the legislature created twenty-seven counties that included Sutter and Yuba counties. Auburn became the county seat of Sutter County at that time. In April, 1851 Placer County was created from portions of Sutter and Yuba counties. At that time Auburn became the county seat for the newly formed Placer County.

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Ten years later, by Act of Legislature on March 30, 1861, the town of Auburn was incorporated. The boundaries of the townsite contained one and one-fourth square miles with the Placer County Courthouse in the center. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, 1868, the Act of Incorporation was repealed. The town reincorporated on May 2, 1888.

To house the county government a courthouse was built in 1854 on a hill overlooking Old Town. (The original courthouse and jail was a log and canvas structure located near Court Street and Commercial streets.) By 1894 the old courthouse found to be inadequate and deteriorated, was moved to one side of the lot to make room for construction of a new courthouse. The setting of the cornerstone for the present courthouse prompted a grand celebration on July 4, 1894. Construction was done in sections with a separate contract for the four sections, one story a year. On July 4, 1898, with "the grandest celebration in Placer County," the new courthouse was dedicated.

The new courthouse brought all of the county offices and the jail under one roof. The ground floor housed the jail, sheriff, tax collector, coroner, treasurer, and farm advisor's offices. The second floor contained the superintendent of schools, surveyor, assessor, recorder, auditor and district attorney's offices. The third story held the clerk, supervisors and court reporters offices and the law library, judges' chambers and superior court room. The fourth floor was use to store the old books and records. Currently the upper stories remain housing the courts while the bottom floor contains the Placer County Museum and its offices.

Fire prevention and suppression began in 1851 in the town of Auburn with the establishment of the volunteer fire department and by the turn of the century there would be three volunteer organizations active in the town. The citizenry collected the funds to construct two firehouses in the 1880s and 1890s; one for each end of town.

In December 1887, the Auburn Hose Company No. 1 was established. They called themselves the Rattlers. In March of 1888 the company purchased its new cart and a truck and extension ladders. Soon after they moved into the new firehouse on the top of what was then called Railroad Street (now Lincoln Way).

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Hose Company No. 2, organized in February 18, 1888, served Old Town Auburn with a fire cart, a pike pole, chain and rope and ladders. In 1893 a firehouse was erected on Washington Street. A third fire company was established in Central Square with volunteers from both of the other companies. In 1916 the city bought three 'high powered Buick cars' for the department. When the fire bell rang there was always a 'merry race' to see who got to drive the cars. It was reported that firemen were seen running in pajamas and slippers to get to there first.

Schools have played an important role in Auburn since the Gold Rush days. In 1852 a small private school was established in the first Masonic Hall building located on the current Courthouse lot. By the late 1870s construction was complete on a two story wooden grammar school. In the 1880s another two story wooden building was constructed on the lot next to the other building. Located in the front of the buildings, next to the street, was the playground.

In 1915, the new Auburn Grammar School building, constructed of terra cotta brick with terra cotta embellishments, was completed. It was located on the playground and when it was complete the two old wooden buildings in the back were torn down and the playground moved to the back of the lot. By the 1930s the new school was too small and another one story, wooden building was erected on the east side of the brick school building. The name of the school changed to Lincoln Way School. In 1936 the grounds of the school were improved with rock walls, stairs and sidewalks as part of the local WPA program. By 1990 the school district and school moved to a new facilities and the City of Auburn moved their offices into the old school campus.

**Religious and Social Institutions**

By 1900 Auburn had five churches: St Luke's Episcopal Church, the Congregational Church, the Pioneer Methodist Church, St. Theresa's Catholic Church, and the First Baptist Church.

The first recorded church service in Auburn was in the winter of 1851-52 when a Methodist minister held an open air service on Snowden Hill overlooking Old Town Auburn. Regular church services were conducted in the courthouse until 1853 when the Methodist church was built on Sacramento Street and dedicated

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in December 1853. This building burned in the 1855 fire. The church was rebuilt on Lincoln Way in 1858 and a parsonage next door was constructed in 1879.

The Catholic Church, established first as a mission of the Folsom Catholic Church, held their first services in Auburn in April, 1859, in the courthouse. The cornerstone for the new church was laid in June of that year. The new brick building was dedicated in October, 1859. By 1910 the parish had outgrown the church therefore a fund raising campaign for a new church began. Plans were for a Gothic style structure that would accommodate 400 parishioners. The cornerstone was laid with much community involvement on May 11, 1911, and the dedication ceremony for the completed church was on December 17 that year.

In 1939 the Catholic Church purchased thirty-five acres of orchard land on Auburn-Folsom Road. In May of 1940 the Mother General and her council, the novices, and several retired sisters moved into the new convent named Our Lady of Mercy. Each spring the sisters went in procession to the orchard as the parish priest blessed the blossoming trees and prayed for an abundant crop. Pears and plums from the orchard was sold to the Newcastle packing sheds and provided income for the convent. The nuns were school teachers at this convent and soon established a kindergarten on High Street near Auburn Grammar School. Then the parents wanted an elementary school. In 1947 a four room school building was constructed on Lincoln Way behind St. Joseph's Church. St. Joseph's school graduated its first eighth grade class in 1948. The school has moved to a new campus on Atwood Road the old building is used for parish offices and classes.

First called Christ Church, St Luke's Episcopal Church began in 1856 and was reorganized as St. Luke's in 1887. Services were held in the old courthouse until their building was completed in 1890.

The First Baptist Church of Auburn, officially organized in 1892, met in the Good Templars Hall in Auburn. In 1898 a lot was purchased on the corner of High and Pine Streets. That year services were held in what was called the "Chapel" constructed on the lot.

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Miners established social societies and fraternal organizations for fellowship and insurance. The formal organization of Masonry was created in England in 1717. Its purpose is to instill moral and social virtue among its members and mankind. Much of the ritual is drawn from the Bible, however there is no religious requirement or affiliation except to believe in the Supreme Being.

The organization uses the guild system of degrees and secret passwords, and stonemason's tools as symbols. The first recorded mention of a Lodge in America is in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* published by Benjamin Franklin in 1731. Many of the Founding Fathers, such as George Washington, Paul Revere, Joseph Warren, and John Hancock, were Masons in addition to Benjamin Franklin.

The first Masonic Lodge in California was organized in 1848 in Tehama, Shasta County. Miners who came for the Gold Rush established organizations that offered fellowship and insurance. Although there were Masons in Placer County as early as 1849, the Eureka Lodge in Auburn was not organized until November of 1851. The first hall was constructed on Maple Street on the current courthouse grounds. In the 1870s they moved to the upper floor of a store on Commercial Street now occupied by the Native Sons of the Golden West. As the new commercial and residential district of town moved closer to the railroad depot, one half mile east of the old Gold Rush settlement, the lodge began to look in the newer, progressive area of town. The lodge also needed more room and banquet facilities and began looking for a site in 1910. The lodge decided on purchasing the one story building that housed a department store owned by W.G. Lee Company. They also purchased ten feet on the east end of the building for the stairway entrance to the upper floors.

The Masonic Hall Association was formed with a capital stock of \$20,000.00. A.D. Fellows, a local architect, although not a Mason, was requested to prepare plans for the Hall. Lardner and Brock reported in their history of Placer County that Fellows "entered into the spirit of the plans so heartily that he soon became a member of the fraternity. He worked with zeal towards the completion of the temple, which really became his monument." Fellows was not well during the construction and went to the hospital for a time, but he did see the building completed before he died shortly after its completion.

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Construction began in 1914. Fellows worked closely with Gladding, McBean Company who offered to put up the terra cotta façade at the cost of \$2890.00 as times were slack. By the time the second bid came in one year later the price dropped to \$2790.00. The corner stone is dated 1915. By that time the war industries were being mobilized and prices went up. The building that was hoped to cost \$25,000.00 totaled over \$50,000.00 when finished.

The Odd Fellows and Masons originally built halls in Old Town however when the buildings were outdated or too small these organizations also moved to the east area of Auburn.

In 1900 and 1913 societies listed in the directory included: Odd Fellows, Rebekah Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons, Royal Arch Masons, Order of Eastern Star, Royal and Select Masters (Masons), Chosen Friends, Native Sons of the Golden West, Ancient Order of United Workman, Grand Army of the Republic, Relief Corps, Knights of Pithias, Independent Order of Foresters, Jr. Order of United American Mechanics, Women's Christian Temperance Union, Women of Woodcraft, Modern Woodman, and International Order of Redmen. These organizations met in one of the three halls in town - Masonic Hall, I.O.O.F. Hall, or the Arthur Hall—all located on Lincoln Way in the east, or uptown, portion of Auburn.

Clubs in the early 1900s included: Improvement Club, Town and Country Club, Travel Study Club, Auburn Gun Club, Monday Night Club, North Fork Game Protective Association, Young Matron's Club, Tahoe Club, and the Social Hygiene Study Class.

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**New Deal and Post War Development 1930-1960**

**Agriculture**

During the Great Depression 95 percent of the fruit ranchers kept their land. This was largely due to ranchers' membership in various fruit co-ops. The co-ops inspected the ranches and loaned ranchers money on the crops. One rancher received a \$5.00 check at the end of the season for his entire crop, however the co-op paid all of his bills at the grocery store, gas station, etc., during the year.

In 1937 the California Fruit Growers, the land arm of the California Fruit Exchange, owned 25,000 acres virgin timberland, a box factory, mill and logging railroad in Graeagle, California. They constructed housing, offices, a dairy, store and other buildings for their employees. It is now a popular summer resort area with many gold courses. This operation made the boxes to ship the fruit. Many of the buildings remain in the town and the rock dairy structure just out of town can be seen with the Blue Anchor logo on the front of the building. In 1937 the California Fruit Exchange comprised 175 local associations and 7500 members.

World War II brought change to the fruit industry. A lack of labor to prune the trees and pick fruit was an obstacle for the ranchers. In 1943 Placer High and Junior College students were offered "victory courses" classes teaching them to prune (75% of pruning was done by Japanese that were removed from the county during the war). The schools also offered classes in thinning, packing, tractor repair and maintenance. University of California Berkeley students were recruited to pick and pack fruit in the summer. To protect the 168 acres of orchards owned by Japanese the Decidious Farm Lands, Inc. was formed by the Pacific Fruit Exchange. Members of the exchange cared for the Japanese who shipped fruit through that organization. The Auburn Fruit Exchange had a similar program for their Japanese members.

In 1946 28,000 acres of orchards and vineyards were in Placer County. In 1954 \$5,267,900 deciduous fruit was shipped from Placer County. In the 1950-60s pear blight, pear decline, the central valley water project, the younger generation going to college instead of continuing ranching tradition, and freeway access to jobs in Sacramento caused decline in fruit industry. Several ranches operated into the 1980s. The Max Ammon

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ranch in Shirland Tract operated until 1986 when they had the best production since his ownership in 1912. The forty acre ranch primarily in pears produced 450 tons in 1986.

The fruit industry supported the county from the 1880s until the early 1970s, when other major industries moved to the Roseville and Rocklin area and commuters began moving to the county. This rural county was built by men and women who worked long hard hours to clear land, plant trees and vines, pick the fruit, package and ship the fruit to stores all around the nation.

**Lumber**

In 1943 plans were made by the federal government for a timber project that would employ 500 men returning from the Armed Forces. Southern Pacific Railroad returned to the federal government 55,000 acres of land that was given to the Central Pacific railroad when they established the railroad. The project, funded by the government, would construct roads on the Foresthill Divide to access the timber land. The government funded \$1,500,000 for road construction. The plan called for small mills for rough lumber near the timber areas and a larger mill in Foresthill or near Auburn to do finishing work. Having a mill nearby would also help the fruit industry with readily available box shook for packing fruit. The projected annual payroll was expected to reach \$750,000.

The Cal-Ida Lumber Company announced plans for construction of new lumber mill and box shook factory on Highway 49 in Auburn on July 4, 1946. Three buildings 80 feet by 100 feet, one building 60 feet by 100 feet and another 60 feet by 150 feet were constructed. The planning mill was to produce 20,000,000 boardfeet of lumber and 10,000,000 boardfeet of box shook a year. The third operation was a moulding factory that produced 6,000,000 boardfeet a year. The mill started operations with 100 to 150 employees. Southern Pacific railroad constructed a sup off the main track that would accommodate nine railroad cars for shipping. The mill finished rough cut lumber from timber in Sierra, Nevada, and Placer counties. Cal-Ida mill continued operations until 1969 when the Di Georgio Corporation purchased the mill for \$3 million. The mill was later sold to Bohemia.

In 1952 some 53,676,100 board feet of lumber came out of Placer County. Lumber was a multimillion dollar industry possibly bringing more cash into the county than agriculture.

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Demand for timber products declined in the 1980s and environmental concerns increased in the Sierra Nevada Mountains which brought a substantial drop in the timber industry. Mills closed or consolidated operations. The massive Cal-Ida Mill (later Di-Georgio and then Bohemia) on the outskirts of Auburn ceased operations in Auburn on March 25, 1985 ending the local lumber industry.

**Commercial Development**

The 1930s began with a positive hope. In 1930 the population in Auburn was estimated at 3,200. Tourist travel over the Victory Highway (Lincoln Highway) was expected to increase forty percent over the last year because of all the road improvements. By 1929 nearly \$1,000,000 was spent on roads in Placer County.

New businesses continued to open in Auburn. The State Theatre installed sound equipment, was remodeled and held a grand re-opening celebration. A new Veteran's Memorial Hall, constructed in 1931, was dedicated. President Roosevelt's New Deal program provide for several buildings and road improvements under the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The Agricultural Fair project was rushed to completion for the annual Gold Rush Revival, an event that brought thousands into Auburn for the celebration since it started in 1924.

The fair grounds included eighteen acres on High Street with a mining exhibit building constructed by the WPA. The building is currently used as the Gold County Museum by Placer County. Construction began on the new Placer Junior College campus. A new City Hall and Fire House was completed by the WPA.

With the highway over Donner Summit improved Auburn businessmen started a campaign to promote the ski industry to bring tourism to Auburn in the winter months. In 1929 the Auburn Ski Club was organized with Wendell Robie as president. Robie owned the Auburn Lumber Company and Central California Building and Loan Company. By December several local organizations published 30,000 winter sports brochures to be distributed in California. Late the following year a State Ski Club was formed with Wendell Robie as president. In January 1932, another organization with local businessmen formed to promote a National Ski Tournament in Lake Tahoe. The

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plan was to have the national ski stars come west after the Lake Placid Winter Olympics. The event was a resounding success and had California Governor “Sunny” Jim Rolph and actress Anita Page reigning as King and Queen of the tournament. This event would pave the way for an international ski event in thirty years later, the 1960 Squaw Valley Olympics.

World War II saw 2,000 Japanese moved from the area in May of 1942. Large numbers of men left for the war the following year. However Auburn won the site of a new Army hospital to be constructed with \$4,000,000. The hospital had 1500 beds and 2300 people including staff. Fifty families needed homes in Auburn. And it provided three to four hundred jobs for Auburn. The National Housing Authority approved fifty-five new homes to be built. The hospital was transferred to the State at the end of the war and used for a mental institution until 1970.

The end of World War II marked more new construction and remodeling in Auburn. Subdivisions were constructed for the returning service men and their families, such as the Fulweiler Subdivision. Enrollment in the schools was the highest ever. Several new businesses opened.

In November of 1947 the new divided U.S. Highway 40 was completed from Maple Street to the east end of Auburn. The new highway bypassed the business districts of Auburn. It skirted along Auburn Ravine, cutting through residential neighborhoods.

Old Town businesses in 1950s included Chinese restaurants, small grocery stores, car repair and body work shops, bars, and the post office. Many of the buildings were vacant or partially vacant and had fallen into disrepair. In 1959 Old Town store owners were encouraged to repair the dilapidated buildings to showcase the Gold Rush era buildings. Old Town Auburn dwindled until the tourist boom began in the late 1960s and continues today.

**Public Institutions**

In the early 1950s local business leaders began the campaign to have the 1960 Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley. The Olympic Committee approved Squaw Valley as the site in 1955. This provided the impetus for replacing Highway 40 with the new divided Interstate 80 from Sacramento to Reno. It also caused business leaders to encourage giving Auburn a facelift. The Chamber of Commerce, at their annual meeting in 1953 along with improvement of traffic problems on there agenda for the following year, was

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city beautification. Plans were made to inaugurate a face-lifting program in business areas to improve the appearance of commercial buildings. Uptown building owners repainted, repaired, installed new awnings, and facades.

In February of 1960 the Olympic torch was carried by local high school and college students from Roseville to Squaw Valley. The torch was carried into Central Square and accepted by Roy Mikkelsen, local business man and 1932 and 1936 Olympian. Auburn businessmen were already looking toward the future to bring more business to town.

During the 1930s many projects in Auburn were developed, financed, and constructed by the New Deal programs instituted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Road improvements, school ground improvements, buildings, such as the City Hall and Fire House, high school gym, museum building in the fair grounds and ground improvements, bridges, and sidewalks were done by the WPA.

The first public high school in Auburn was established in 1897 in a building that housed the private Sierra Normal College established in 1882. In 1914 it was reorganized into Placer Joint Union High School. A new three story, brick building was constructed next to the old college building in 1906. The old college building was torn down and in 1926 two detached wings were added perpendicular and lower on the hillside to the three story building. The two side buildings are still in use by the high school; the original building was torn down and a new building of complimentary design constructed in its place. A new gym was added to the campus in 1936 by the work of the WPA.

In 1914, the Placer Union High School District was born, stretching from Loomis to Lake Tahoe. That same year, college-level classes were offered. The new college was named Placer Junior College. It was the fourth oldest junior college in California at the time and only one of nine statewide; the faculty numbered four.

Due to enrollment loss caused by World War I, Placer Junior College was abandoned by 1920, but the college idea never completely died. In 1936, the college was reestablished, again in Auburn, with the enthusiastic support of local voters. It is 1936 that Sierra College uses as its official date of birth.

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Three wings of buildings were constructed to serve primarily Placer Junior College, but Placer High School students shared many of the facilities, instructors and organizational structure with the new college. Enrollment numbered about 100 and the college athletes

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went by the name “Spartans.” The college grew steadily and by 1938, 200 students were enrolled.

In 1957, the new Sierra Junior College District successfully passed a bond measure to pay for new facilities. In 1958, a site selection committee considered thirty-five possible locations and the present Rocklin site was chosen. In 1961 the college moved to Rocklin and Placer High School took over the old college campus that is still in use today.

Another important institution for the community was the development of a library and a library system for the entire county. As early as 1874 the citizens expressed the need for a library. The idea was to establish a literary society that could set up a library system. The *Placer Herald* reported, “It is too expensive for each one in a town to buy all the new books that are issued, but through a library organization we could have all the reading works of value and interest at a comparatively small cost.” Fourteen years later the Auburn Library Association held a fund-raiser dinner and entertainment in the Music Hall with the proceeds to toward the establishment of a library. “The Little Gem Cookbook” compiled and printed by the Ladies Library Association, also known as the Endeavor Club of the Congregational Church was another fund raiser that year. The Crescent Club, an athletic group, also contributed their books. By 1888 they had over 200 books. The first location is believed to the old Congregational Church located in Central Square.

In 1907 the City of Auburn was awarded a grant from the Carnegie Foundation for the building that was completed in 1909 on Almond Street. The building consists of an upper story and a basement.

Placer County was the 47<sup>th</sup> of fifty-eight counties to establish a county library system. Mrs. Kelly Dunlap Robinson, a member of the City Library Board, in her speech to the Colfax Ladies’ Aid Society on April 6, 1936, began the campaign to establish a free county library. On May 6, 1936 the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the creation of a county library.

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Mrs. Faye K. Russell (Hupp) began as County Librarian in January of 1937. The County Library was located in the basement of the City Library building. Mrs. Mazie Harris Huntley was appointed assistant county librarian and cataloguer.

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By April each of the five supervisorial districts had a library with one hundred books each. Colfax, Foresthill, Loomis, Sheridan and Auburn (for residents outside the city limits) each had a branch. By June of 1938 Newcastle, Dutch Flat, Tahoe City, Penryn, and Applegate had branches. Branches were added in Alta, Gold Hill and Thremalands in 1939. More branches followed: Kings Beach, 1941; Rocklin, 1943; and Big Bend and Eden Valley, 1949. In June 1938 the total books purchased equaled 4,706.

Mrs. Portia Moss, County Superintendent of Schools, began a program for local school boards to contract with the library system for services. The money would come from the book fund. Thirty-two elementary schools participated in the program by 1940.

During World War II the Supervisors considered merging the city and county libraries but did not act on it. The merger would take place in the 1968 when the library moved to Shepard Square on High Street, then to DeWitt Center, and finally in 1973 moved into the new facility on Nevada Street.

The Veteran's Memorial Hall, built to honor veterans who gave their lives in our country's service, was constructed in 1931-32. It was designed by W. E. Coffman and contains elements of Spanish Colonial façade detailing and English half timbering. The site for the building was once the city cemetery. The graves were removed and transferred to the IOOF cemetery to use the site for a city park. On January 7, 1931 the site was declared a memorial in perpetuity for the veterans. The building was dedicated on Oct 16, 1932 with an addition built in 1944 with monies from Governor Earl Warren's Christmas Tree Fund. The building continues to be used by veteran's and social groups.

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**Associated Property Type—F. 1**

**CIVIC BUILDINGS**

**DESCRIPTION**

Civic buildings associated with the City of Auburn’s architectural and historic resources include properties like schools, libraries, city halls, and firehouses. These buildings represent the community’s transition from a temporary mining town to a permanent settlement, and demonstrate the city of Auburn’s commitment to the future as an incorporated city. Civic buildings reflected the establishment of government institutions and civil authority. They were constructed by government or quasi-government agencies as public buildings for community use, rather than privately owned buildings, but some of these buildings now have non-government uses. Civic buildings are generally located in prominent and central parts of the city of Auburn, in order to make them accessible to the general public.

Civic buildings constructed during the applicable periods used materials like brick, stone, concrete and sometimes wood. Massing and scale were used to lend an air of authority to civic buildings. Architectural styles included late Victorian styles like Stick and Queen Anne, Beaux Arts, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, and WPA Moderne.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Properties nominated as civic buildings may be eligible under criteria A, B or C in the areas of community development, commerce, architecture, business, industry, or other areas that may be sufficiently explained within the contexts of the City of Auburn MPS. Properties nominated under Criterion A must demonstrate significance in the areas of government, education, public safety or other civic function relating to the city of Auburn. Properties nominated under Criterion B must demonstrate direct association with individuals significant to the history of the city of Auburn and associated with government, civic institutions, public safety or education. Properties nominated under Criterion C must demonstrate significance as examples of architectural styles found within the city of Auburn or as the work of a master architect or craftsman.

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

To qualify for listing under civic buildings they must be located within the city limits of Auburn, California, must have been built during the period of significance, and must have been the location of public service activities, education, public safety or other civic functions, and retain sufficient integrity. They must be eligible under Criteria A, B or C

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within the contexts defined above.

Buildings proposed under Criterion C should retain their original design elements and retain sufficient integrity within its context and criteria of eligibility.

Moved buildings proposed under Criteria Consideration B must retain enough historic features to convey its architectural values and retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Moved properties must still have an orientation, setting, and general environment that are comparable to those of the historic location and that are compatible with the property’s significance.

**Property Type: F. 2**

**COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**

**DESCRIPTION**

Commercial buildings associated with the city of Auburn’s architectural and historic resources include buildings found in the city’s two primary historic business districts, Old Town and Uptown. Buildings within Auburn’s business districts include one and two story buildings built of brick, concrete, concrete block, stucco, and wood. The buildings reflect a variety of styles, including Late Victorian, Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival, and Modern Movement architecture. These properties are generally located in the uptown Auburn business district along Lincoln Way and High Street. This portion of Auburn was developed after the Central Pacific Railroad completed its tracks to Auburn in 1865. Predominant periods of construction are late 1890s, 1905-1915, early 1920s, 1935-1940 and 1950-1960. These periods reflect the peaks in the three major industries that supported the community—mining, agriculture, and lumber. A few buildings remain of the Auburn Lumber Company. Commercial buildings were used for a variety of commercial ventures throughout the period. They represent drug stores, hardware stores, dry goods and general merchandise, bakeries, as well as saddle and harness shops, restaurants and hotels and theaters.

Auburn’s commercial buildings are primarily located in two neighborhoods: Old Town and Uptown. Early Gold Rush and settlement era buildings are generally located in and around the Old Town Auburn Historic District. These are primarily brick or wood frame buildings dating from 1855-1865 and into the 1920s. Buildings located along High Street and Lincoln Way in the East Auburn area (Uptown) were generally constructed from the years after 1865 through 1960, after the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad through Auburn shifted the heart of the business district in the direction of the railroad.

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**SIGNIFICANCE**

Commercial buildings must be significant under Criteria A, B or C. Nominated properties must reflect the trends throughout Placer County and the Mother Lode counties during the period of significance and retain integrity.

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

To qualify for listing as commercial buildings, the nominated property must be located within the city limits of Auburn, California, must have been built during the period of significance, must have been used for commerce activities, and retain integrity. Properties eligible under Criterion A must demonstrate association with Auburn's commercial, professional, retail, service sector, or other business use, including light industrial use. Properties eligible under Criterion B must demonstrate direct association with individuals significant to the history of the city of Auburn in the areas of commercial development, business, professions or other similar context. Properties eligible under Criterion C should retain their original design elements and retain sufficient integrity to clearly demonstrate their architectural style, workmanship, and design.

**Property Type: F. 3**

**SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS**

**DESCRIPTION**

Social and religious building associated with the city of Auburn's architectural and historic resources include fraternal hall buildings and churches. Fraternal halls were usually two-story buildings. The bottom floor was often used as commercial space, with the meeting halls located upstairs. Brick, terra cotta, and stucco are the materials used for the halls. Church or religious buildings constructed in Auburn during this period are constructed of wood with shingle siding or stucco. Architectural styles include individual styles characterized as Late Victorian and Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival styles.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Social and religious buildings must be significant under Criteria A or C within the applicable contexts defined by this MPS some area of significance related to their historic use. Properties nominated under Criterion C must reflect architectural trends present in Placer County and the Mother Lode counties during the period of significance and retain a high degree of architectural integrity.

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**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

To qualify for listing under social and religious buildings they must be located within the city limits of Auburn, California and must have been built during the period of significance, should have been used for social or religious activities, and retain integrity. They must be eligible under Criteria A or C within the contexts defined by the City of Auburn MPS. Buildings proposed under Criterion C should retain their original design elements and retain sufficient integrity within its context and criteria of eligibility.

Buildings used for religious purposes must meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration A, deriving primary significance for architectural or artistic distinction if nominated under Criterion C, or if it is significant under a theme in the history of religion having secular scholarly recognition, or under another historical theme not involving the building's religious use.

**Property Type: F. 4**

**RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS**

**DESCRIPTION**

Architectural development of the residences began as the town did, first as a mining camp with temporary canvas and log housing, later replaced by more permanent wood framed, brick, and stone houses. Most of the early Gold Rush buildings are gone. A series of major fires destroyed many buildings in the Old Town district, but some examples of early residential buildings remain, including the Bernhard House (1851), the McDaniel house (1857) and the B.F. Myres House on Sacramento Street (1860).

Residences in Auburn are found in architectural styles common to the period, including Stick, Queen Anne, Shingle, Folk Victorian, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Craftsman, Modern Ranch and Modern Split-Level. The most common building material is wood frame and siding, and a substantial number of homes with stucco siding constructed during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are also some residential buildings of brick or stone.

Early examples of residential construction were commonly two-story buildings. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the two-story house gave way to the single or one and one half story building and finally the 1930-60s saw one-story or in rare cases split-level homes in the late 1950s. During the 1920s and 30s the catalog home became popular, and was considered an affordable choice for many residents and contractors who constructed them within the city of Auburn.

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Early residential areas expanded to the East Auburn area soon after the Central Pacific Railroad went through in the 1860s. Prominent families established large two-story homes on fifteen to twenty acre parcels and planted fruit orchards and gardens on their grounds. These homes lined Lincoln Way and High Street. As the town developed in the newer uptown commercial area these larger land owners subdivided their property into housing tracts.

Scattered throughout these early tracts are pre-1900 houses of primarily the Queen Anne style of architecture. There are many one and one half and two story houses built before the turn of the century with Queen Anne elements. Craftsman bungalows and residential buildings constructed in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century revival styles are also common.

**Queen Anne**

Queen Anne style homes in Auburn are typically two or one and one half stories, with steeply pitched, irregular shaped roofs. Many have dominant front facing gables, with porches that have spindlework for the supports and railings. They may have overhanging eaves; round, square, or polygonal tower(s); shaped and Dutch gables; a porch covering part or all of the front facade, including the primary entrance area; a second-story porch or balconies; pedimented porches; differing wall textures, such as patterned wood shingles shaped into varying designs, including resembling fish scales, or wooden shingles over brickwork, etc; dentils; classical columns; spindle work; bay windows; horizontal bands of leaded windows; monumental chimneys; and painted balustrades. This was a very popular style in the many Auburn subdivisions developed between 1880 and 1910.

**Stick and Shingle**

Technically a predecessor of Queen Anne, Stick homes generally feature a steeply pitched gabled roof with cross gables, commonly with decorative trusses at the apex. Wooden wall cladding is interrupted by patterns of horizontal, vertical or diagonal boards known as stickwork, raised from the wall surface for emphasis. Later examples often include decorative scrollwork and spindlework, sometimes referred to as Stick-Eastlake.

Shingle houses in Auburn have wall cladding and roofing of continuous wood shingles, generally with asymmetrical facades and irregular, steeply pitched roof lines and intersecting cross gables. Large porches are common on Shingle style homes.

**Revival Styles**

Colonial Revival and Classical Revival homes were common in Auburn during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in between the construction eras of Victorian styles and later Craftsman styles. Other revival styles are also potentially eligible, including Spanish Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival. In each case, revival style residential buildings incorporate patterns and themes common to the influencing style applied to wooden frame or brick residential buildings. Eligible revival-style houses nominated under this

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MPS must clearly identify the revival style utilize.

**Craftsman Bungalows**

Craftsman bungalows typically feature a combination of a low pitched, gabled or hipped roof, deep eaves with exposed rafters, one to one and one half stories, hipped or gabled dormers, large covered front porches with massive columns under the extension of the main roof, and typically double hung windows with multiple lights in the upper sash and single paned in the lower sash with simple wide casings. They became common in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Ranch Houses and Split-Level Houses**

Post-World War II development in Auburn shifted to broad, one-story Ranch style homes. Ranch homes generally feature a hipped or side-gabled roof of low pitch and wood siding, with prominent picture windows. Ranch houses commonly have a deep setback from the street, compared to the small front yards of earlier styles, and automobile garages are commonly integral to ranch houses.

Split-level houses are a postwar housing type that combines a one-story main floor, where the main entrance is generally located, and a two-story section that generally includes bedrooms on the second floor and a den or garage on the first floor. The first floor of the two-story section may be on the same level as the floor of the one-story section, but it can also be lower than the level of the main floor, with both stories of the two-story section accessible from the main floor by staircases. Like ranch houses, split-level houses are generally broad and horizontal, with hipped or side-gabled roof and broad front yards.

**Subdivisions**

Several tracts and subdivisions created a major portion of residential areas in Auburn. An example of the development is The earliest recorded residential subdivision in Auburn is the Auburn-College Tract, developed in 1887. It was followed by College Heights in 1894 and College Heights Extension in 1912.

College Heights Extension consisted of 17 lots on the west side of College Way and four lots along High Street. The lots on College Way originally extended from that street to Pleasant Avenue to the west. Later the lots were divided with lots facing Pleasant Avenue. The east part of the tract is located on land once part of a larger tract belonging to General Jo Hamilton, Attorney General of California. In 1882 Hamilton donated land for the Sierra Normal College campus. The west side, College Heights Extension, was developed by C. Goldsberry who constructed some of the homes in that section.

The tree-lined street originally named Chicago Boulevard has always been known for its gracious appearance and lovely well kept homes, as well as its association with many

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families who were prominent merchants and businessmen.

Other tracts that were developed around the turn of the century include: Aeolia Heights (1889), Almond Heights (1906), Chamberlains Addition (1889), Auburn Prospect Hill Addition (1894), Davenports Tract (1914), Freeman Tract (1891), Geraldson Tract (1909), Hale Tract (1898), Hinks Tract (1900), Hoffman Tract (1900), Huntley Tract (1888), Linden Heights (1891), Locher Subdivision (1911), Los Altos Subdivision (1900), Oak Park Subdivision (1893), Sawyers Subdivision (1900), Smith's Subdivision (1895), Tuttle Tract (1891), and Walsh Tract (1908). These subdivisions encompassed between 15 and 75 lots.

In the 1920s residential tracts of bungalows and catalog homes were constructed in Parkside Terrace (1923), Hale Tract #2 (1922), and Canyon Court (1928) developments. After the Depression the Hilltop Subdivision (1940) and the Tuttle Tract extension (1942) were developed. The era following World War II saw the movement to the ranch house style, as exemplified in subdivisions like the Uplands Tract (1944), Skyridge Acres (1948) and Holly Hills (1959).

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Residential buildings must be significant under Criteria A, B or C during the periods of significance under the applicable contexts. Residential properties nominated under Criterion C must reflect the residential architecture trends throughout Placer County and the Mother Lode counties during the period of significance and retain a high degree of architectural integrity.

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

To qualify for listing, residential buildings must be located within the city limits of Auburn, California and must have been built during the period of significance, and retain sufficient integrity to remain eligible. They should be significant examples of a style or type of architecture and/or be associated with important people or historical events. Buildings proposed under Criterion C should retain their original design elements and retain sufficient integrity within its context and criteria of eligibility. A building that has been altered by intrusive additions, the extensive application of materials inconsistent with the historic period in which the building achieved significance, or the removal of significant architectural details is excluded from nomination under this criterion. If windows are replaced original fenestration patterns should remain. Unobtrusive additions to the rear of the building (not larger than the building itself) are not considered a reason for excluding the building from listing. Integrity requirements for buildings that derive their primary significance for their historical associations may be less stringent than those nominated for their architectural significance alone.

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**Geographical Data:**

This MPS is limited to properties within the incorporated limits of the City of Auburn.

See attached map.

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## H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

A historic resources survey was completed for Auburn in 1987 under the auspices of the State Office of Historic Preservation and reviewed by staff member Don Napoli, Historian. The survey inventoried 547 properties. The decision to include the large number of properties greatly diminished the research on the individual buildings. While some buildings have inaccurate information or information completely lacking, others are complete and fairly accurate. The reviewer stated, "...many properties were entered in the inventory, but the statement of significance were often brief, without historical references, and lacking strong argument." Moreover, the survey looked at the properties in terms of historic districts rather than individual properties. This survey compiled the properties surveyed into nine districts: Old Auburn Historic District; Placer High School; Parkside Terrace; Uptown; Tuttle Tract; College Way; Crutcher Court; Flint Station (site); Hale and College Tract; and Huntley Subdivision.

In spring 2009, Auburn Mayor Mike Holmes met with Cindy Toffelmeir, Historian for the Office of Historic Preservation, and Carmel Barry-Schweyer, Public Historian with over twenty years of experience in historic preservation, to discuss buildings that he would like to see listed. All of the buildings were included in the survey and most were included in what was the "Uptown District" of the survey. Toffelmier suggested a multiple property listing rather than a district. It was decided that the city limits of Auburn would be the geographical boundary.

As a result of this meeting three themes for historic contexts were developed. Properties were grouped in the three contexts: 1. the Gold Rush settlement period from 1848-1865; 2. the community development period from 1865-1960; and transportation 1848-1960. In 1865 the Central Pacific railroad reached Auburn. The station was located approximately one mile east of the Gold Rush settlement causing a shift from the Gold Rush Old Town to the train station location. This shift made an obvious division for the contexts. Auburn businessmen and the Auburn Ski Club were active in promoting the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, California. This resulted in a movement by city to beautify the town in the mid to late 1950s. This seemed an appropriate ending of community development. Auburn's location on a major transportation corridor

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from wagon roads east across the Sierra and to the northern and southern mines, the first transcontinental railroad, first transcontinental highway (the Lincoln Highway), the Victory Highway, U.S. 40 and Interstate 80 and the importance of these prompted the transportation theme. The transportation context was not completed at the time of this submission. After further discussion with OHP staff, the periodization was revised to reflect three overall periods: the 1865-1960 context was separated into two periods, from 1865-1929 and 1930-1960, to reflect the period of community development prior to the Great Depression as separate from the influence of WPA and other New Deal era development, wartime and postwar development, ending with the changes to the city in preparation for the 1960 Winter Olympics.

After compiling the survey information with more extensive research the property types were identified by function and age for each context. Descriptions, significance statements, and registration requirements were developed for each property type. Registration requirements were based primarily on a comparison of existing properties within the type.

Research was conducted in the Placer County Archives and Research Center, California State Library and California State Archives. Carmel Barry-Schweyer, retired Placer County Archivist, and her team of volunteers have been compiling information regarding Auburn's history and its buildings for over ten years. Oral histories, newspapers, maps, deeds, land claim records, census records, and historic photos supplied data on for contexts and individual properties. Only those properties requested by the mayor were completed with this submission.

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Additional Documentation:

Properties submitted to California SHPO with nomination:

- Auburn City Hall and Fire House
- Auburn Fire House No. 1
- Auburn Fire House No. 2
- Auburn Grammar School
- Auburn Library
- Bloomer Cut
- Masonic Hall
- Oddfellows Hall
- Placer County Bank
- State Theatre

Property submitted to NPS:

- Auburn Library