

2.2.17 Central Shops Historic District

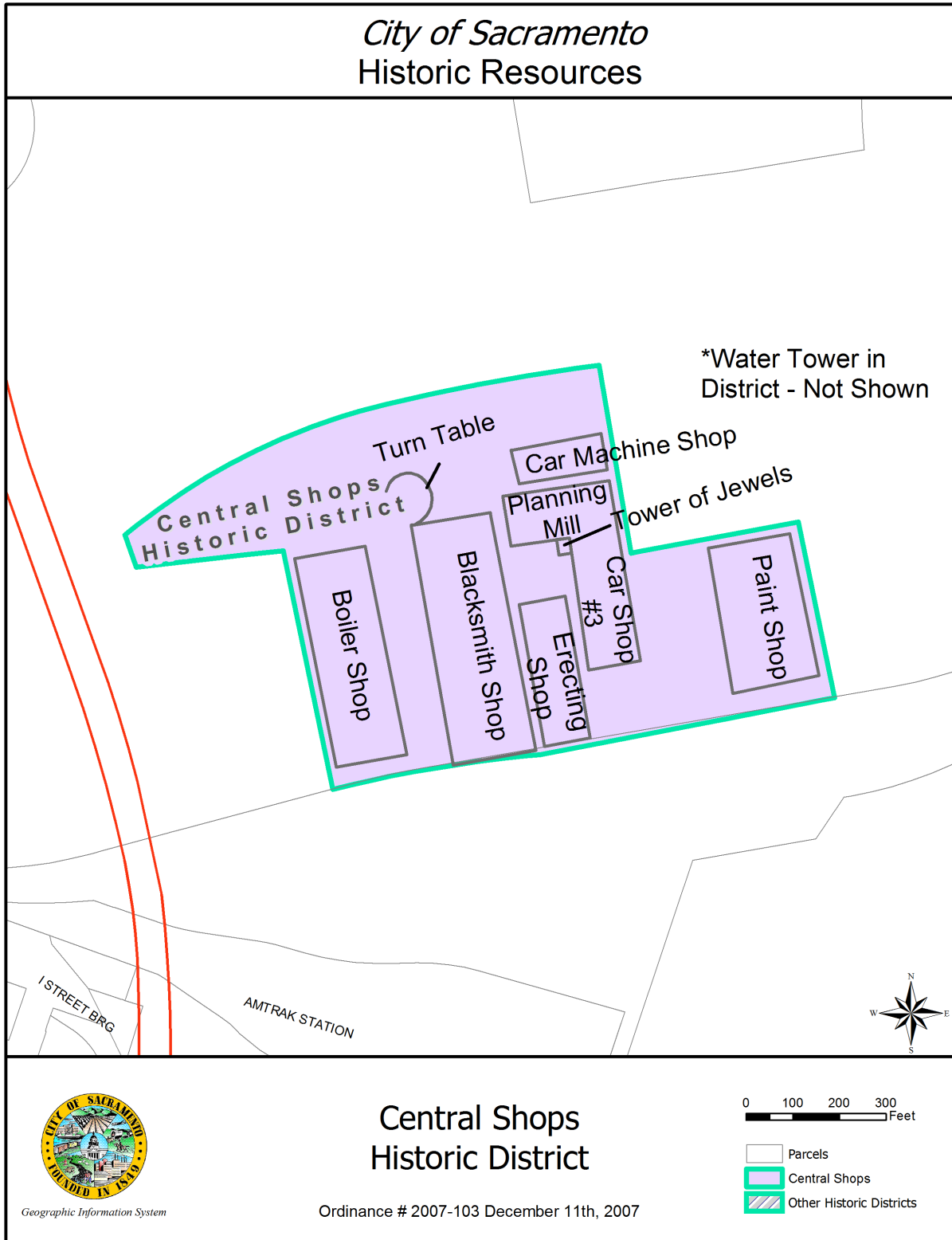
Ordinance # 2007-103
December 11, 2007

Central Shops Historic District

The Central Shops are associated with important dates, people and features of the Transcontinental Railroad construction and initial operation, as well as the subsequent development of the nation's railroad system. The Central Shops served as the principal shops of the Pacific Lines of the Southern Pacific system between 1868 and 1990, overseeing subsidiary shops from Portland, Oregon, Ogden, Utah, San Francisco and Los Angeles, California; and east to El Paso, Texas, with additional major influence on the shops of the Atlantic Lines through Louisiana and New Orleans. During the first 80 years or so the Central Shops complex was recognized as the largest integrated industrial complex west of the Rocky Mountains, and perhaps west of the Mississippi River. As late as World War II they retained industrial capabilities found nowhere else in the West, such as the ability to produce the giant metal rollers for the wartime Kaiser steel plant in Fontana, California. The Central Shops were by far the largest single employer in the Sacramento region until after World War II, with workers playing a major part in the economic, social, cultural, and political development of the Sacramento region. The shops were a major center for early innovation, invention, and development of railroad and related technologies. Additionally, the shops became an early center for systematic standards, supported by testing, with regional and national impacts.

Chief mechanical officers based at Sacramento, notably A. J. Stevens and his successor H. J. Small, gained national recognition, the former for innovation, the latter for standardization. But on the national scene, the most important personage following the original founders of the railroad was E. H. Harriman, who promoted the Sacramento-originated standards all across his railroad system covering over half the country, and who also instituted major capital improvements across the system including the last major expansion of the core historic shop buildings preserved today. Architecturally, the shop buildings qualify as being representative examples of typical mid-19th century to late Victorian industrial architecture, with some portions rebuilt in the early 20th century. They feature classic samples of decorative and architectural details from their various periods of construction.

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SACRAMENTO REGISTER OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Central Shops Historic District Contributing Resources

Current Address: 105 Bercut Drive **APN:** 002-0010-051

Contributing Resources:

The Car Machine Shop
The Planing Mill
Privy
Car Shop No. 3
Blacksmith Shop
Paint Shop
Erecting Shop
Boiler Shop
Turntable
Water Tower
Site Features

Note: Addresses of properties may not be all the addresses associated with the property; address shown reflect the address assigned to the parcel by the Sacramento County Recorder's Office.

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