



Berkeley Kangaroo Rat

LAST SEEN CIRCA 1940, PRESUMED EXTINCT

These small rodents lived along rocky outcroppings and among the chaparral and grasses of the East Bay Hills. Residential development and house cats killed them off during the mid-20th century, although unconfirmed sightings have been reported since.

California Condor

LAST SEEN LATE 1800S, ENDANGERED

Condors once nested in towering redwoods and feasted on animal carcasses from the hills to the shore. Lead poisoning was a major cause of their demise. Condor bones have been recovered from Ohlone shellmounds.

Bay Checkerspot Butterfly

LAST SEEN MID-1900S, THREATENED

These butterflies likely vanished from the East Bay hills when the last patches of their rocky serpentine habitat was covered with housing during the 1950s-70s.

Coho Salmon

LAST SEEN LATE 1800S

Early colonizers reported salmon runs in the Bay so thick that you could “walk across their backs.” Pollution, dams, and subversion of creeks eliminated these fish from the East Bay.

Grizzly Bear

LAST SEEN 1863

The California grizzly was exterminated within a few decades of the Gold Rush. The last of these massive omnivores to be seen in the East Bay was shot in a San Leandro orchard.

Sooty Crawfish

LAST SEEN EARLY 1900S, EXTINCT

These dark crustaceans were commonly found crawling around East Bay creeks until non-native Signal crawfish were introduced to California and took over their habitat.

Thicktail Chub

LAST SEEN CIRCA 1950S, EXTINCT

This minnow-sized fish was one of California’s most common until its marshy habitat of tule beds and streams was destroyed. Pollution and invasive species also played a role in its demise.

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Piedmont Baths 1890-1939

This swimming complex, which included hot tubs, pools and a café, was located at Bay Place and Vernon Avenue. According to Oakland Wiki, “it was built by a consortium of local developers and investors hoping to promote interest among San Franciscans in the appeal of East Bay living.” The baths drew water from Lake Merritt and warmed it with “waste steam heat from the cable-car powerhouse next door.” Part of the structure survived as car dealership and the site is currently home to Whole Foods.

Transcontinental Railroad CIRCA 1870

The completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 triggered a massive boom in Oakland as major industries flocked to establish operations near this vital hub of trade and transit. Passengers on the Central Pacific line could disembark on 7th Street in downtown Oakland or continue all the way out to the Oakland Long Wharf, which jutted into the Bay and provided a transfer point for those heading to San Francisco.

LONG LOST OAKLAND

CALIFORNIA

A project for examining Oakland’s history to better understand the present and help shape the future.

Map Guide



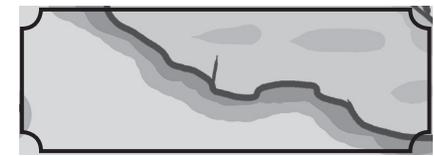
Ohlone Shellmounds

ANCIENT SACRED SITES OF NATIVE PEOPLE



The Key System

MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY LINES CIRCA 1911



San Francisco Bay Shoreline CIRCA 1857

TO UNDERSTAND THIS MAP, start with the key. The shellmounds of the Ohlone people who lived here for thousands of years have been obliterated by development. The mass transit Key System that once connected the East Bay has been replaced by a maze of highways, creating walls that cut between neighborhoods. The shoreline of marshes and tidal estuaries that sustained an abundance of life is now an industrial waterfront built to the specifications of the global economy. In short, the story of this city’s transformations has always been the story of human and ecological devastation. Yet Oakland continues to shine with beauty, culture, and resistance. That energy is the inspiration for this project.

Adapted from the Artist Statement by T.L. Simons, 2018

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Alameda County Courthouse 1875-1950

This Victorian building located on Broadway between 4th and 5th Streets looks impressive on the outside, but by the 1920s judges called the leaky, crumbling temple of justice a “vermin-infested menace to health and records”. Bailiffs even had to hold umbrellas over judges’ heads during rain storms!

City of Oakland balloon CIRCA 1909

When this balloon, piloted by Park Van Tassell and Albert Vander Naillen, Jr., launched from 14th and Franklin it was meant to inspire Oakland pride among the thousands of spectators who gathered to watch its “magnificent ascension.” Unfortunately, as this newspaper headline indicates, the aircraft did not live up to its high expectations: “Oakland Aeronauts, bruised and bleeding, are dragged over fences by derelict gas bag.”

China Clipper FIRST FLIGHT 1935

This flying boat carried the first commercial airmail from the United States across the Pacific. On its first flight from the coast of Alameda to Manila, the Pan American seaplane was so full of letters [over 110,000] that its weight prevented it flying over the under-construction Bay Bridge, so it had to pass underneath. More than 25,000 spectators gathered to watch this momentous occasion that almost ended in disaster.

Fruit Vale Orchards CIRCA 1870S

The Fruitvale district was named after the orchards that characterized the area in the mid-late 19th century. The construction of the Bray family’s “Oak Tree Farm” in 1858 sparked a trend of prominent families building large estates surrounded by manicured lawns, tree-lined drives, and commercial orchards. Many of these properties were subdivided in the 1880s and most of the orchards were long gone by the time the neighborhood was annexed by the City of Oakland in 1909. The Cohen-Bray House on 29th Ave. is one of the last remaining structures from the “Fruit Vale” era.

Key Route Inn 1907-1932

This “showplace hotel” straddled the electric streetcar tracks at the corner of Broadway and West Grand Ave. so that guests could board the Key System without exiting the building. The Inn’s most prestigious guest was President William Taft, who visited in 1909. A fire consumed much of the hotel at the dawn of the Great Depression in 1930 and it was torn down two years later.

Idora Park 1903-1929

This amusement park located between Telegraph and Shattuck Avenues, between 56th and 58th Streets, was North Oakland’s greatest attraction during the early 20th century. According to Oakland Wiki, it was “built to encourage streetcar use, as well as boost real estate sales.” Some of the most popular attractions included a roller coaster, a zoo, a skating rink, an amphitheater and an opera house. The park was briefly turned into a relief camp for refugees of San Francisco’s 1906 earthquake and later closed as funds dried up during the Great Depression.

Moore Dry Dock PICTURED CIRCA 1942

During World War II, this West Oakland shipyard employed 35,000 workers, including many African Americans fleeing the Jim Crow-era south. During this decade, Oakland’s African American population increased from about 8500 in 1940 to nearly 48,000 by 1950. However, after the war ended, demand for ships evaporated and the operation went out of business. The site is now a recycling operation run by Schnitzer Steel.

Oakland Brewing & Malting Company

PICTURED CIRCA 1907

This castle-shaped brewery was located at Chestnut and 26th Street. In the early days, the company used horse-drawn carriages to deliver kegs of its flagship beer brand: Blue and Gold Lager. The brewery was squeezed by resource shortages during World War I-era rationing. It closed shortly before Prohibition went into effect and the building was later converted into a milk-bottling plant.

Oakland Observatory 1883 - EARLY 1890S

Anthony “The Water King” Chabot donated the funding and telescope for Oakland’s first building designed for astronomical research. The Observatory was constructed in the Second Empire style of architecture at the current site of Lafayette Square. A larger observatory replaced this building in 1892, but the Chabot Observatory, as it came to be called, was moved up to the Oakland Hills in 1917 to avoid light pollution, which the Observatory’s director Charles Burckhalter called “a most serious evil from an astronomical point of view.”

Pacific Coast Cannery PICTURED CIRCA 1906

Following San Francisco’s devastating 1906 earthquake, Pacific Coast Cannery founder Lew Hing provided food and shelter for Chinese refugees fleeing the city. At its peak, the cannery employed about 1000 workers, primarily women from West Oakland’s Chinese, Italian and Portuguese immigrant communities. Thanks to a contract to supply relief rations to European allies during World War I, this operation grew into the third largest cannery on the West Coast. Although the cannery closed during the Great Depression, part of the original structure at the corner of Pine and 12th Street was converted in the Pacific Cannery Lofts development into the early 2000s.

Palo Seco Sawmill CIRCA 1840S

Oakland’s first mill for logging old growth redwoods was likely constructed by French naval deserters in 1841 on the Palo Seco Creek, above Dimond Canyon. Since they didn’t have nails, the structure was held together with wooden pegs. The 1849 Gold Rush triggered an influx of additional timber-milling operations in the vicinity of sites now known as Joaquin Miller and Redwood Regional Parks. Although many of these mills were run by “squatters” lacking legal claim to the land, nearly all of Oakland’s ancient trees were chopped down by the end of the 1850s.

CONTINUED ON BACK

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