

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property



historic name Placer County Bank

other names/site number Bank of California, Union Bank of California

## 2. Location

street & number 874 Lincoln Way  not for publication

city or town Auburn  vicinity

state CA code CA county Placer code 061 zip code 95603

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn,  
California

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce/Trade--Bank

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Commerce/Trade--Bank

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals-Beaux Arts

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Beaux Arts

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foundation: Concrete

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walls: Concrete

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roof:

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other:

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**Narrative Description**

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(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Placer County Bank Building is a two story Beaux Arts concrete building located in the center of the business district of Auburn. The three Roman arched inset windows, with the door to the bank under the center window, are separated by four Doric pilasters that extend from the two foot high lug sill to the frieze. The symmetrical front elevation has a door on the ground floor and window on the second story at each end of the building. Between the end windows and doors are terra cotta wreaths. The frieze is adorned with the name "Placer County Bank" in the center and "1913" on each side that are incised and decorated with gold leaf. The building is located in the commercial district of Auburn on Lincoln Way. There is a two-story addition to the building in the back. The building has been well maintained and is in excellent condition.

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**Narrative Description**

The Placer County Bank building, built in 1913, faces south onto Lincoln Way in the business district of Auburn. The thirty-five by forty-one foot, rectangular plan contains two stories plus a full basement. The foundation is concrete and the walls are concrete scored to look like large one foot by two foot blocks. Granite steps lead up to the three doors. Three arched windows with Doric pilasters on either side are located in the center of the building. The main door to the bank is located in the center of the building flanked by the two center pilasters. At either end are doors that lead to the offices on the second floor. Above the each of the side doors are terra cotta wreaths. On either side of the side doors are bronze finished lamp sconces and on both sides of the main door in the center are bronze lamp standards with five bulbs set out at the beginning of the granite step entry. Above the two story pilasters the frieze contains "Placer County Bank" in the center and "1913" on either side. The letters and numbers are covered with gold leaf. A metal cornice tops the flat roofed building and is embellished by dentils and sixteen lion heads.

The building has been well maintained and retains the original elements with the exception of the original bronze covered doors that been replaced with aluminum framed glass doors. The center door frame is bronze colored aluminum. Between 1950 and 1954 (the permitting process for the city began in 1954) an addition to the back of the building (north elevation) was constructed of concrete. The addition is on a downhill slope, two stories, and is inset approximately four feet from the northeast corner of the building. The bottom story of the addition is adjoining the basement of the original building while the second story is level to and adjoining the first story of the original building. There is a parking lot off the back addition that accessed from High Street. The parking lot can also be reached by an alley that runs from Lincoln Way to High Street beside the east elevation of the building.

The interior of the building was extensively remodeled in the 1990s. The building retains all of its original exterior elements of design and materials with the exception of the three doors which have been replaced with aluminum framed glass doors. An attached addition was added to the back of the building in the early 1950s, during the property's period of significance. The setting and location are the same as when it was constructed. The structure still evokes the feeling of permanence and stability. The property retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Architecture
- Economics
- Commerce

**Period of Significance**

1913-1956

**Significant Dates**

1913-1914

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Herdal, George - builder

Sumner, Charles Kaiser- architect

**Period of Significance (justification)**

Construction began on the Placer County Bank building in 1913. The bank opened its doors for business that year and has continued as an important bank in Auburn to the present day. In 1956 Placer County Bank merged with the Bank of California.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

None

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Placer County Bank building, built in 1913, is an excellent example of Beaux Arts style popular from 1885 to 1920. The property is eligible as part of the Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn MPS, under the context Community Development of Auburn from 1865 to 1960. The property is eligible under Criterion A as a Commercial Building important to the growth of the community of Auburn, and Criterion C as the work of San Francisco master architect Charles Kaiser Sumner, known before World War I as Charles Sumner Kaiser.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Placer County Bank is significant in local history as the bank was formed in 1887 by local businessmen to serve the community. The Bank of Auburn was merged with the Placer County Bank in 1907 and in June of 1918 Placer County Bank consolidated with the First National Bank retaining the Placer County Bank name. The bank served the mining, agricultural and logging industries for the area. Placer County Bank continued to serve the Auburn area when it merged with the Bank of California during the winter of 1955-56 according to bank president Harry Rosenberry. The same bank officers and employees continued in their positions under this merger. The Bank of California continued to serve the community until the recent merger with the Union Bank of California.

During the Great Depression there was renewed interest in mining. The bank acted as the agent between the miners and the U.S. Mint in San Francisco. Gold brought into the bank was weighed on scales and transported to San Francisco where the U.S. Mint purchased the gold. According to bank president, Harry Rosenberry, in 1937 this bank branch shipped more gold to the San Francisco mint than any other bank in California, a direct result of the mining in the area.

East Auburn developed as a commercial center after the Central Pacific Railroad constructed its tracks along the hill skirting the American River Canyon. Many businesses moved from Old Town Auburn to one half mile to the east closer to the railroad. Placer County Bank is an example of the growth and progress of the community from the small buildings and wandering streets of the old mining camp location to the larger commercial buildings and streets of east Auburn. Placer County Bank started in a small building on Commercial Street in Old Town and in 1913 moved into the new building more than three times the size (45 by 50 feet) on the Railroad Street, later renamed Lincoln Way as it was the location of the Lincoln Highway through Auburn.

The Placer County Bank building is one of three buildings of the Beaux Arts style in the city of Auburn. The most prominent structure in the commercial district of Lincoln Way, the imposing building provides an example of stability and permanence that financial and government institutions projected in early twentieth century America.

San Francisco architect, Charles Kaiser Sumner, who during World War I reversed his middle and last names, designed the building. He was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1874. He graduated from the Columbia University School of Architecture and traveled to Europe and the Middle East on a Perkins traveling fellowship. He began his working life in New York City in the firm of McKim, Mead, and White, working under Charles Follen McKim, whom he greatly respected and admired for his talent and hard work. He moved to Berkeley in 1906.

Between 1906 and 1941 Sumner designed more than fifty residences in Palo Alto, twenty houses on the Stanford University campus, about fifteen houses in Berkeley, as well as the Claremont Club, taking shares in the club in lieu of a design fee. Also of his design are the Los Altos Golf and Country Club, the Butte County Courthouse in Oroville, and the Rangers' Club for the National Park Service in Yosemite (listed on the National Register of Historic Places). He designed the Palo Alto College Terrace Library, where WPA labor was employed in its construction, were also designed by Sumner. He designed several buildings in Sacramento as well, including several large residences and the multi-story Farmers & Merchants Bank.

Sumner worked within the Eclectic movement, and mastered the details of many styles. This movement spanned the late 19th century through about 1940. The Eclectic movement was much more concerned with faithful representation of earlier styles, such as classical Greek, Roman and European architecture. Greek and Roman architecture were strong influences in commercial and institutional architecture, examples of which you can readily see in banks and university buildings. Sumner preferred the English Cottage, Tudor, and Colonial Revival models, as well as the occasional Beaux-Arts/Mediterranean Revival structure.

Sumner wanted his buildings to reflect a feeling of permanence, obvious strength and durability. He believed the job of the architect was to achieve beauty and restraint was an important element of beauty: composure is the groundwork on

which beauty rests. Composure was for Sumner the object of composition: “the process of composing and quieting a house’s various parts, so that they appear happy and at peace together.” Chief among the architect’s tools for composition, including balance, scale, and symmetry, was proportion. The Placer County Bank building manifests Sumner’s ideas of beauty and composure.

Local builder, George Herdal, constructed the Placer County Bank as well as many residences and commercial buildings in Auburn.

The building retains all of its original elements of design and color with the exception of the three doors which have been replaced with aluminum framed glass doors. An attached addition was added to the back of the building in the early 1950s. The setting and location are the same as when it was constructed. The structure still evokes the feeling of permanence and stability. Lincoln Way was paved in front shortly after the building was completed. The building qualifies under Criterion C as an outstanding example of Sumner’s Beaux Arts design and retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The building is eligible under Criterion A as a Commercial Building important to the growth of the community and qualifies under the Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn MPS.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

"A Self Guided Walking Tour the Historic Auburn Buildings." City of Auburn, 1988.

Harris, Cyril M., Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture. Dover Publications, New York, 1983.

Lardner, W. B. and M.J. Brock, History of Placer and Nevada Counties. Los Angeles, California: Historic Record Company, 1924.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1990.

Napoli, Donald S, "Auburn Historic Resources Survey." City of Auburn, June, 12, 1987.

*Placer Herald*, Auburn, Placer County California

Rosenberry, Harry, President of Placer County Bank and Bank of California, oral history, "Banking in the Foothills." Placer County Historical Society, April 28, 1986.

Smith, Mrs. P.T., Mrs. Earl Lukens, and Mrs. D.W. Lubeck, Auburn Blue Book. Placer County Republican: Auburn, California, 1913.

Upton, Dell and John Michael Vlach, Common Places Readings in Vernacular Architecture. University of Georgia Press, Athens, Georgia, 1986.

"Western Architect and Engineer." Vol 52-53, 28-29, 30-31.

[http://www.julielehmanhomes.com/default.asp?f=listing\\_details&listingid=57356&listingtype=1](http://www.julielehmanhomes.com/default.asp?f=listing_details&listingid=57356&listingtype=1)

<http://www.sachistoricalsociety.org/userfiles/File/GladdingMcBeanSacramento.doc>

<http://www.pastheritage.org/Sumner.html>

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>10</u> Zone	<u>667520</u> Easting	<u>4307220</u> Northing	3	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing
2	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing	4	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Parcel number 022-151-01, City of Auburn, Placer County, CA

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is the city lot on Lincoln Way where the building and parking lot are located.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Carmel Barry-Schweyer/Historian

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date May 5, 2011

street & number 12190 Holly Vista Way telephone 530-885-7476

city or town Auburn state CA zip code 95603

e-mail carmphil@sbcglobal.net



Placer County Bank

Placer County, CA

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:** Placer County Bank

**City or Vicinity:** Auburn

**County:** Placer

**State:** CA

**Photographer:** Camel Barry-Schweyer

**Date Photographed:** 5.6.2011

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

- CA\_Placer\_Placer\_County\_Bank\_0001.tif: south elevation, camera facing north.
- CA\_Placer\_Placer\_County\_Bank\_0002.tif: east elevation, camera facing northwest.
- CA\_Placer\_Placer\_County\_Bank\_0003.tif: east elevation, camera facing northeast.
- CA\_Placer\_Placer\_County\_Bank\_0004.tif: north elevation, camera facing south.
- CA\_Placer\_Placer\_County\_Bank\_0005.tif: southwest corner, camera facing northeast.

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Julie Longly, Union Bank of California

street & number 874 Lincoln Way

telephone 530-885-3701

city or town Auburn

state CA

zip code 95603

**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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Placer County Bank
Name of Property Placer, CA
County and State Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn, California
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation

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**Figure Log:**

Figure 1 of 3 Placer County Bank construction 1912

Figure 2 of 3 Placer County Bank c1914

Figure 3 of 3 Placer County Bank 1946



**Figure 1 of 3: Placer County Bank construction 1912**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Additional Documentation

Placer County Bank
Name of Property
Placer, CA
County and State
Architectural and Historic Resources of Auburn, California
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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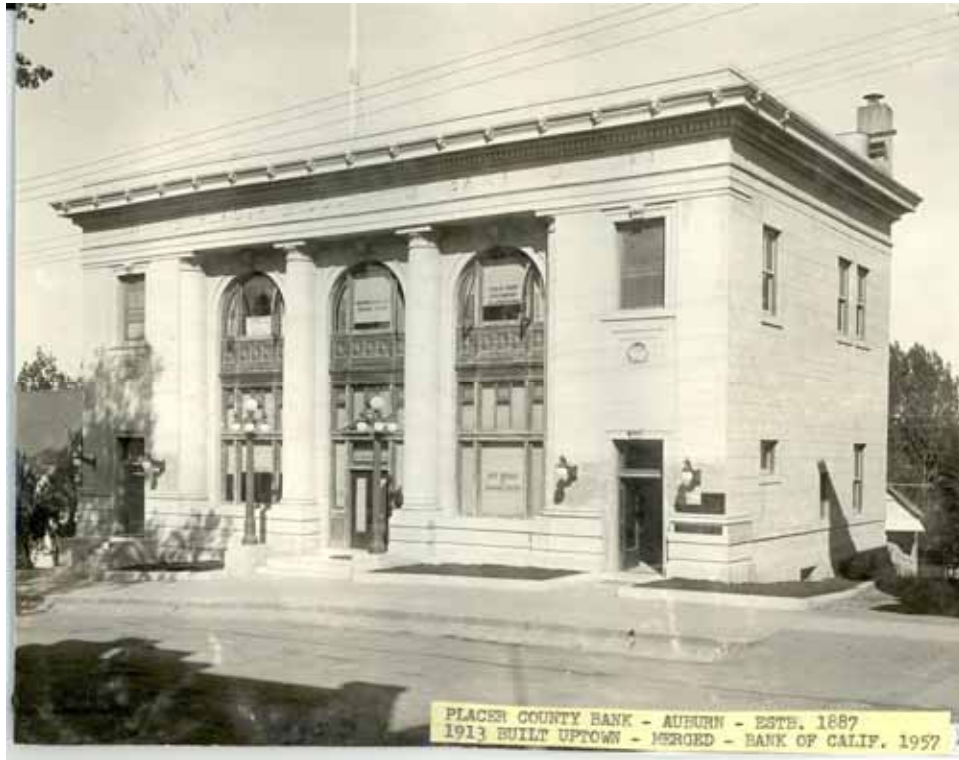


Figure 2 of 3: Placer County Bank c1914



Figure 3 of 3: Placer County Bank circa 1946