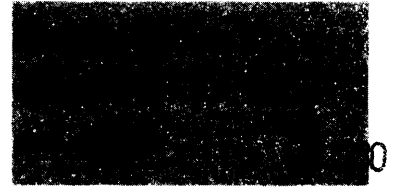


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Bank of Tracy

and/or common Central Plaza

**2. Location**

street & number 801 Central Ave. \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Tracy \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 26th

state California code 06 county San Joaquin code 077

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Arthur R. Sasser

street & number P. O. Box 1188, 7915 - 11th

city, town Tracy \_\_\_ vicinity of state California 95376

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. San Joaquin County Courthouse

street & number 222 East Weber

city, town Stockton state California

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title City of Tracy Architecture & Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

date January 1978 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county  local

depository for survey records State Office of Historic Preservation

city, town P. O. Box 2390, Sacramento state California 95811

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

#### Exterior Description

Located within Tracy's original commercial center, the Bank of Tracy and its adjoining commercial units dominate the west side of Central Avenue between Sixth and Ninth Streets. Neighboring structures tend to be late 19th century to early 20th century vintage and represent a variety of commercial building types, from theatres to stores to banks. As one of the more prominent Central Avenue structures, the Bank with its complimentary commercial wing is an essential component to this cohesive streetscape.

Measuring 65' x 125', the nominated property consists of the 2-story Bank of Tracy at the corner of Central and Eighth, and an adjoining 1-story commercial wing divided into four stores. Buff colored pressed brick faces the masonry structure on the east and south facades, and red brick covers the rear and north facades.

Derived from the Neo-Classical Revival tradition, the building's design is characteristically reserved and ornamentation is sparse. The white terra cotta of the columns, entablature, details and white door and window frames are attractive contrasts to the buff brick and decorative in their own right.

The 3 bay Bank facade is framed by square corner piers, the entablature and the base of the building, thus focusing attention on the recessed central area dominated by 2 monumental, fluted engaged columns. Elevated by the base, the columns are topped with acanthus and palm leaf capitals and flank the central entrance. A bold architrave surrounds the entrance doors and transom light. Dentils, an egg and dart molding and an antefix at the crest, trim the pediment. The original entrance doors were removed several years ago and were replaced with paneled oak doors during a major renovation of the building in 1978. Tripartite windows divided by a horizontal bar flank the entrance. Lintels of vertical bricks create a subtle contrast to the English garden wall bond used throughout the building. Wrought iron railing was added along the sills for security purposes. The railing design was derived from ironwork on the south door.

Plain brick panels are the sole decorative feature in the spandrels separating the first and second floors. As in the ground floor, the second floor windows are composed of smaller tripartite windows divided by a horizontal bar and are topped by the same lintel treatment. The entablature is surmounted by a stepped parapet. Ornamentation is reserved to egg and dart moldings, modillions at the cornice and a festooned medallion in the parapet. A panel with the Bank's name is set within the frieze.

Four prominent piers divide the south elevation into five bays. Both tripartite sash and spandrels are slightly recessed, following the front

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	APR 28 1980
DATE ENTERED	JUN 3 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE -1-

facade model. A side entrance, covered by a canopy suspended from the building, boasts its original doors with decorative ironwork.

The rear elevation of both the Bank and commercial wing have window and door openings at irregular intervals. One ground floor window in the Bank is screened by iron bars, an original security measure.

The controlled Neo-Classical design of the bank is carried through to the commercial wing. Decorative features are reserved to frieze panels inset with diamond shaped turquoise tiles. Each pier separating the four commercial units has a square turquoise tile inset. Originally the stores had cabinet windows covered by awnings and topped by transom windows. During the 1978 renovation, the window areas were outlined with heavy wood piers and lintels. This addition did not disturb the original decorative panels or transom lights. The two central windows were converted into slanted bay windows and all windows were glazed with multi-paned sash. Wood paneling faces the storefronts and paneled doors were added.

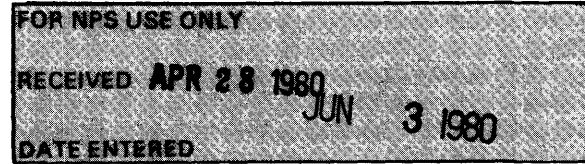
#### Interior Description

At the time of construction, the Bank was divided into a 15' x 30' lobby and a 40' x 60' banking room. The president's office was directly to the right of the entrance with the cashier's office to the left. The director's room was at the rear, along with the vault, a business room, and a restroom for ladies. Wood trim and wainscoting was in dark West Coast mahogany, the counter bases were of Alabama marble and the floor was inlaid tile. The ceiling was in an "artistic panel effect".(1) The whole combined to create an "air of solidarity".(2) The upper floor was designed for lodgings, except for those rooms facing Central Avenue which were office suites. A total of 34 rooms occupied the second floor. Vacant for over thirty years, the bank's interior suffered. The light fixtures, back stair, bathroom fixtures, second floor wood trim and hardware were the only salvagable original features.

In 1978 the interior renovations included the installation of new wood floors, carpeting, office partitions, platforms, mezzanines and oak wainscoting. Second floor renovations have not been extensive as the offices were in reasonable repair. Wood trim, wainscoting, the back staircase and tile foyer are original. Light fixtures, original office doors, hardware, coved ceilings and bathroom fixtures have been retained.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE -2-

The two southernmost commercial units have been combined to create the Central Plaza reception area. Carpeting, wainscoting, office partitions and a new staircase have been added. The restored basement coal heater is on display in this area. A health spa and beauty parlor occupy the two remaining units and have been redecorated by the tenants.

Footnotes:

1. "Bank of Tracy in New Home", Byron Times - Seventh Booster Edition, 1920-1921, p.76.
2. "Bank of Tracy in New Home", Byron Times - Seventh Booster Edition, 1920-1921, p.76.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1920 **Builder/Architect** George Wagner/W. H. Weeks

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Bank of Tracy is significant as a fine example of a building type and for its historical associations with the town's early development and important citizens. Designed by prominent California architect William H. Weeks, the building's Neo-Classical design reflects the optimism and civic pride of small town America. The bank's early history was that of the town. Serving agricultural, commercial and private interests, the bank was a decisive factor in Tracy's growth during the first quarter of the 20th century.

The Neo-Classical Revival style was popular for banks throughout California early in the 20th century. Stability and the promise of future growth were summed up by stately, confident lines. The air of permanence, generated by the classic tradition, was particularly suitable for banks at a time when closings were more common than today. The Bank of Tracy's Neo-Classical Revival design reflects these traits. The architect's first plan did not include the monumental engaged columns on the facade, but called for square brick piers. Changing the design to include the imposing columns is a telling point, underlining the importance of the idiom and what it represented.

Architect William H. Weeks is best known for his numerous designs of schools, banks, libraries and business blocks. Weeks attended the Brinker Institute of Architecture in Denver, Colorado. After moving to California, he opened offices in Watsonville, San Francisco and Oakland. Weeks was a versatile architect, designing buildings for both small towns and big cities in the popular styles of the day. Budding communities like Tracy appreciated Week work, for his distinguished buildings provided focal points around which a town could grow. Four other Tracy buildings were designed by Weeks: the Wacksmith Building; Tracy Union High School; West Side Bank; and the now demolished West Park School. These structures are indicative of the popularity and suitability of Weeks designs.

The Bank itself is a well-executed example of a Neo-Classical Revival structure. Sparse ornament, the monumental engaged columns, and the subtle color contrasts between brick walls and trim combine to create the cool elegance particular to the style. Both Tracy Banks by Weeks are Neo-Classical Revial in design. However, the Bank of Tracy is distinguished by the adjoining commercial wing. It is not clear whether the wing was actually designed by Weeks. Nevertheless, both structures were planned and built at the same time and both incorporate identical design elements. The result is a unified neighboring facade which quietly compliments the more ambitious design of the Bank.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Attached

# 10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property .187 acre

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Tracy, California

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

1	0	6	3	8	8	0	0	4	1	7	7	5	9	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is on assessor's lot #235-067-03 measuring 65' x 125', the rectangular lot is located on the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Eighth Street.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Welden for Arthur R. Sasser (Owner)

organization Charles Hall Page & Associates, Inc. date November 18, 1979

street & number 364 Bush Street telephone (415) 362-5154

city or town San Francisco, state California 94104

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathy Miller

title \_\_\_\_\_ date April 15, 1980

**For HCRS use only**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Sally Gold date 6/13/80  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: [Signature] date 6-2-80  
Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 28 1980

DATE ENTERED

JUN 3 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE -1-

Tracy's history during the first quarter of the 20th century is entwined with that of the Bank's. John C. Droge, reputed to be the richest man in Tracy, organized the Bank in 1909. Droge was born in Holm Schleswig-Holstein, in northern Germany. At 16 he moved to New York and continued to California by way of Panama. He bought land near Ellis, which he leased to farmers, then moved back to Berlin to study engineering. In 1891 Droge returned to California, settling in Tracy four years later. A man of many talents, he was instrumental in developing Central Avenue, owned a general store, and ran a ranch southeast of Tracy. Droge opened his first Bank of Tracy building on the west side of Central between Seventh and Eighth in 1910. By prompting commercial, agricultural and private interests, the Bank soon became a pivotal force in the town's growth and development.

The Bank's original resources of \$25,000 grew to over \$1,000,000 in 10 short years. New quarters were necessary for expanding business. Tracy pioneer A. D. Buschke, then owner of the Bank, chose a corner lot at Eighth and Central for the new structure and adjoining commercial wing. Buschke erected the Bank at a cost of \$35,000. George Wagner from San Francisco was the contractor and Lester Edner was in charge of construction.

In 1923, the Bank of Tracy was sold to the American Bank of Oakland, which later became the American Trust Company. The Bank moved north to 1023 Central Avenue in 1947, later becoming Wells Fargo Bank at the same location. Some of the second floor offices and the commercial units were in use into the 1950s, but the banking hall was left vacant. In 1978, the owner, Arthur Sasser, undertook the renovation of both the Bank and the commercial units. Known today as Central Plaza, the complex has been leased to capacity and houses the Tracy Chamber of Commerce, the Tracy Board of Realtors and Downtown Improvement District, and two commercial businesses. The owner plans to utilize the incentives of the Tax Reform Act of 1976 in this project.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 28 1980

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE -1-

Bibliography

"Bank of Tracy in New Home", Byron Times - Seventh Booster Edition, 1920-1921, p. 76.

"Bank of Tracy Plans New Building", Tracy Press - v.23 #14 (June, 1919) p. 1.

City of Tracy. Diamond Jubilee Book. 1953.

City of Tracy Architectural Survey, 1978. On file at San Joaquin County Courthouse.

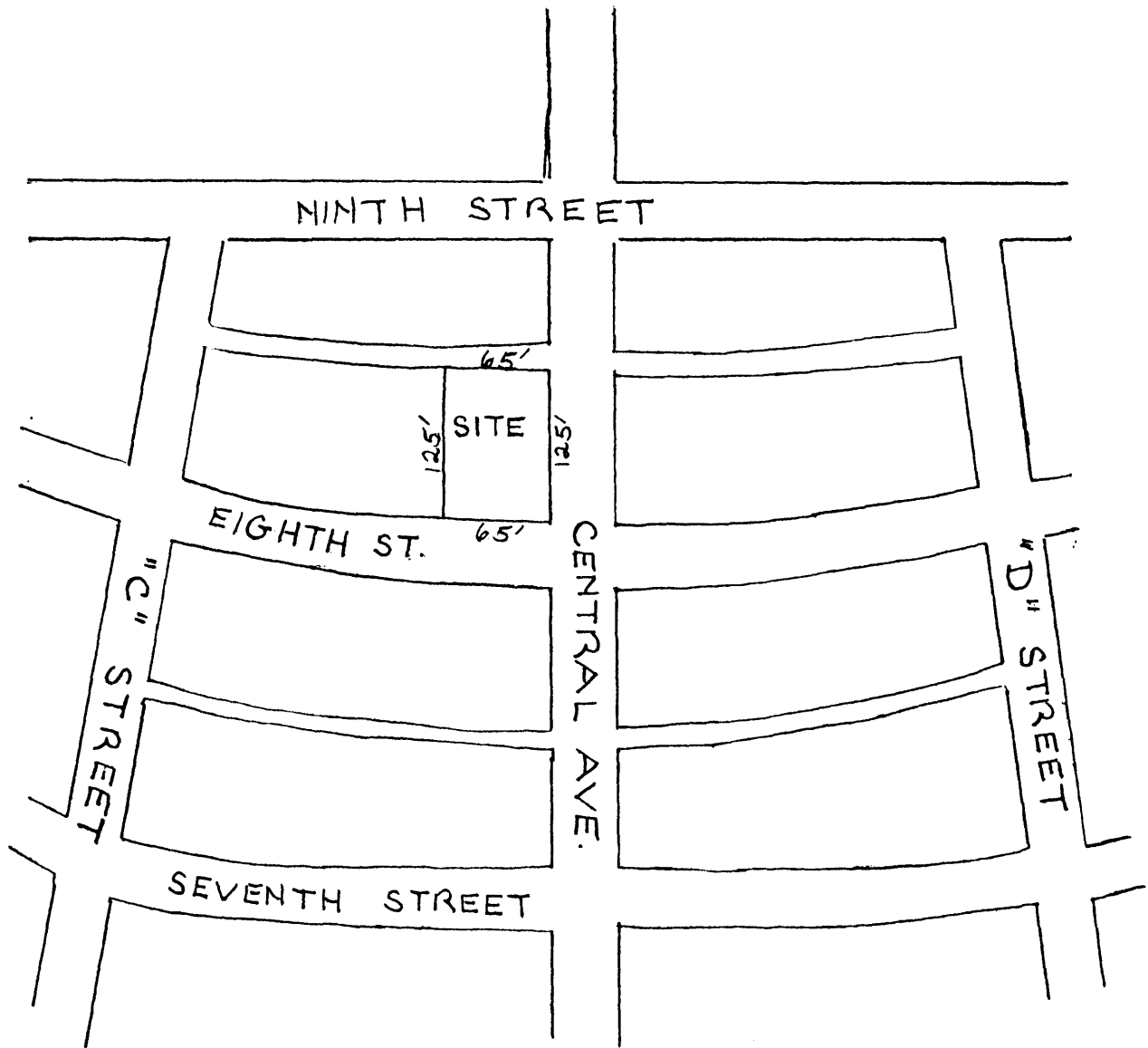
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Tracy 1913, 1921, 1930, 1940.

Tracy Press. Progress Edition. v.67 #37 (May 31, 1963) p. 6.

"Two Local Banks Were Started in 1909", Tracy Press - Centennial Edition. (September 6, 1978) J16.

Weitze, Karen J. "West Side Bank Viewed by State Group", Tracy Press. (August 28, 1978)





APR 28 1980

Bank of Tracy  
Tracy, California  
Assessor's Lot #235-067-03

JUN 3 1980