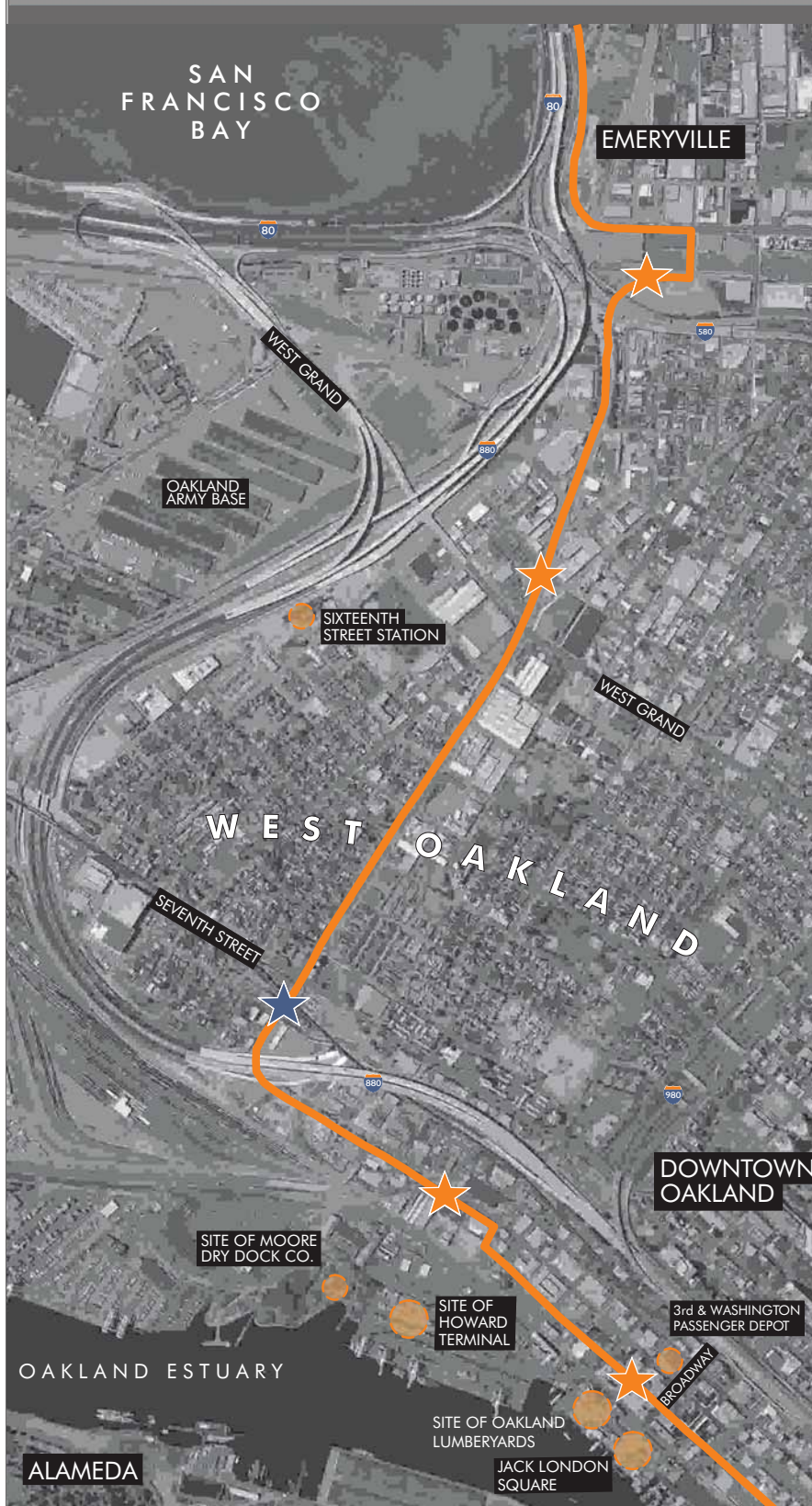
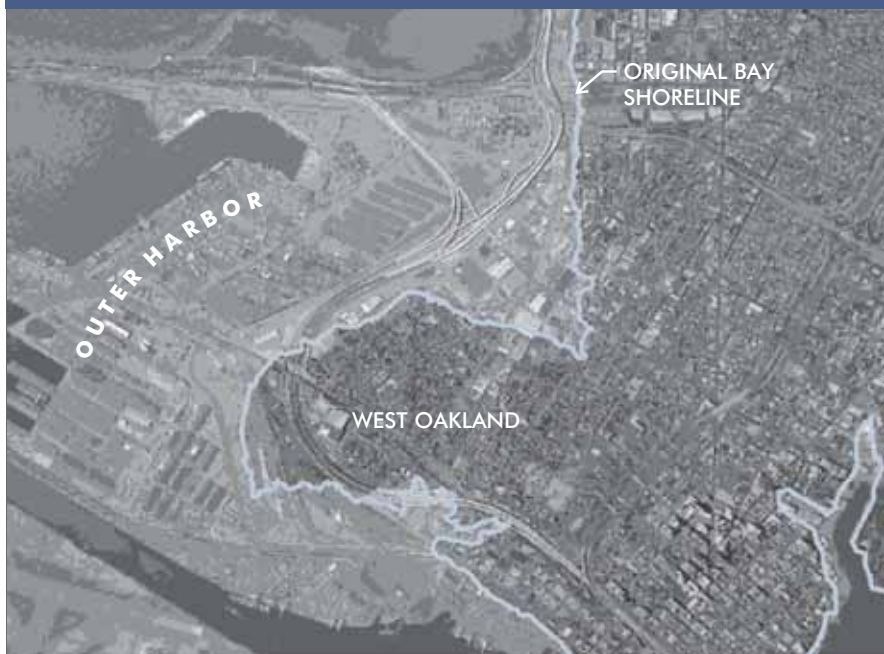


SEVENTH STREET



- KEY
- OAKLAND BAY TRAIL
 - YOU ARE HERE
 - LOCATIONS OF HISTORICAL MARKERS
 - AREAS OF INTEREST



Funding assistance provided by:



For more information on the history of Oakland's waterfront, visit the Oakland Main Library History Room and the Oakland Museum of California.

Spine of West Oakland

The elevated BART tracks are the latest link in Seventh Street's long history as the transportation spine of West Oakland. The street once led to the Long Wharf and Mole on the western waterfront, where the Central/Southern Pacific maintained its transcontinental terminus. The ferry terminal served westbound passengers headed for San Francisco, and eastbound passengers boarding both local electric trains and steam trains for destinations across the country. The railroad's maintenance yards and shops covered hundreds of acres of reclaimed marsh south of Seventh Street. Industrial plants adjoined the overland tracks. This dynamic district supported West Oakland's richly diverse working-class culture.



Queen Anne cottages at the corner of Ninth Street and Mandela Parkway, West Oakland: typical working-class residences of the Victorian period. (Painting by Anthony Holdsworth.)

Heart and Soul of West Oakland

West Oakland's neighborhoods in the late 19th and early 20th centuries included many families of African American, Latin American, Asian, and European origin. Among the largest immigrant communities were those from Italy, Greece, Portugal, and Mexico, each with its own network of churches, clubs, and businesses.



French and Italian Bakery, West Oakland, 1910.

Seventh Street served as the commercial, social, and religious center for West Oakland's many ethnic groups, and the street abounded in Italian restaurants, Greek coffeehouses, Mexican grocery stores, and Black churches.

Gospel, Blues, & Jazz

West Oakland's African American community, one of California's largest, was a cradle for the emerging art forms of blues and jazz. Railroad employees brought back the latest recordings, and pioneer jazzmen like King Oliver and Kid Ory came to town in the 1920s. Seventh Street became a celebrated music venue known for small clubs like the Creole Café, Bluebird Cabaret and most famously, Slim Jenkins'. West Oakland was also home to well-known musicians such as the bandleader Sidney LeProtti and guitarist Saunders King, a minister's son raised in a Pentecostal church on Seventh Street. Gospel was represented by the flamboyant King Louis H. Narcisse, founder of Mount Zion Spiritual Temple Church, who made his first recordings in a Seventh Street studio.