

# ESTUARY INDUSTRY



## Railroads & Industries

Railroads and shipping set the stage for Oakland's industrial development. Transcontinental trains have been rumbling down the Embarcadero (old First Street) since 1869, and oceangoing vessels have been calling at local wharves since the 1870s, when channels began to be dredged. By bringing in raw materials and carrying away finished products, railroads and shipping lines served a wide variety of industries concentrated along the waterfront. The estuary shoreline bristled with wharves, coal bunkers, lumberyards, planing mills, foundries, factories. Oakland was a supply center for the region, storing huge reserves of coal and lumber.

Central Pacific and its successor, Southern Pacific, monopolized rail service and controlled the waterfront. In 1909, Western Pacific began service on a competing transcontinental line; the old passenger station still stands at Third and Washington Streets. Western Pacific triggered new lawsuits that allowed the city government (after decades of effort) to regain the shoreline from Southern Pacific and begin the task of creating a municipal port.



Oakland Lumber Company, First & Broadway, 1894.



Western Pacific passenger station, Third and Washington, soon after it opened in 1910.

## Estuary Industry

Industries found the estuary beneficial not only for transportation, but also for a bountiful supply of water, suitable for a wide variety of uses. Little thought was given, however, to cleaning the water after it was used. It would not be until the mid 20th century that waste water received some level of treatment.



This 1874 map shows a smokestack at the upper left next to water that fed into the Oakland estuary.

## Jack London Square

The Port of Oakland began developing Jack London Square in the early 1950s at the foot of Broadway, as part of Oakland's centennial celebration. Since then, the complex of restaurants, retail stores, offices, hotels, and entertainment venues has grown to cover six blocks. It remains one of Oakland's premier destinations, drawing millions of visitors a year.

### 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.