**Page** 1 **of** 13 \***Resource Name or #:** 912–914 12th Street

**P1. Other Identifier:** Hotel Ridgeway, Hotel Del Paso

**\*P2. Location: \*a. County:** Sacramento

**b. Address:** 912-914 12th Street **City** Sacramento  **Zip**: 95814

**\*c. USGS 7.5' Quad:** Sacramento East **Date:** 1992

**\*e. Other Locational Data: APN#:** 006-0047-008

**\*P3a. Description:**

The four story hotel structure is located in downtown Sacramento on 12th Street adjacent to an alley between I and J Streets. The building is sited on a slab on grade on a 40 x 80 foot lot. The first story is brick, and the building above is wood frame. There is no basement. The building reflects minor Craftsman Style influences with the large brackets supporting the roof overhang and the flared bases of the bays above the first floor. The prominent south and east elevations contain vertical ‘columns’ of angled bays that project from the walls of the building from the second floor to the roof . The bays each contain three windows, and each window is double hung with wood sash. The sides and façade of the building have been re-surfaced with stucco.

The bases of the upper floor angled bays project from the east façade above the shop canopies and shop openings.

There are two light wells on the interior that extend to the roof from the second floor. They are surfaced with thin metal sheeting impressed to imitate a brick pattern. The interior hallways are narrow and some of the doors appear to still have transom windows partially obscured by nonhistoric lowered hallway ceilings. The south wall along the alley contains window openings on the ground floor that have been infilled and fitted with smaller windows. There are slight variations in the infill patterns.

[Please see Continuation Sheet #P.3a Description]

**\*P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP 7 .

**\*P4. Resources Present:** ■ Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other(Isolates, etc.)



**P5b. Description of Photo:**

View of east façade on 12th Street and south elevation with bays on the alley, View to northwest.

**\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:** ■ Historic

Prehistoric Both

1912

**\*P7. Owner and Address:**

Ridgeway Hotel Investor

1001 6th Street, #200

Sacramento, CA 95814

**\*P8. Recorded by:**

Paula Boghosian, Historic Environment Consultants

5420 Home Court

Carmichael, CA 95608

**\*P9. Date Recorded:**

November 2001, November 2012

**\*P10. Survey Type:** Reconnaissance with construction date research

**P11. Report Citation\*:** Sacramento City Historic Architecture Survey Update 2001

**\*Attachments:** ■NONE Location Map Sketch Map ◼ Continuation Sheet ◼ Building, Structure, and Object Record

Linear Resource Record Archaeological Record District Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record

Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (List)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Page 2**  **of**  13 **\*NRHP Status Code** 5S2

**\*Resource Address:** 912 12th Street

**B1. Historic Name**: Del Paso Hotel

**B2. Common Name:** Ridgeway Hotel

**B3. Original Use:** Residential, commercial on ground floor **B4. Present Use**: vacant

**\*B5. Architectural Style:** Craftsman, Italianate influences

**\*B6. Construction History:**

The hotel building was constructed in 1912 by owner W.S.Simmon(d)s.

By 1915, there was an ice cream factory on the ground floor with Del Paso Hotel on the upper floors.

In 1919, the storefront was remodeled and interior changes made.

1927: stucco was applied to the surface by owner C.Hellman.

1930: storefront was remodeled.

1931: City directories indicate the ground floor was vacant.

A Sanborn map of 1952, indicates a fire escape on the north end of the east elevation.

1971: fire sprinkler system was installed by owner Abdul Rahim.

1976: a new roof was installed by owner Yuriye Kosumoto.

1978: a metal stairway was installed in a rear stairwell.

1988: building was remodeled;

an elevator was installed at the north end of the west elevation

. Visible surface discoloration on the west end of the south wall may have been due to installation of a fire escape and its later removal. Dates unknown.

**\*B7. Moved?** **No \_Yes \_Unknown Date: Original Location:**

**\*B8. Related Features:** none

**B9a. Architect:** unknown  **b. Builder**: unknown

**\*B10. Significance: Theme: Commercial development** **Area:** Downtown Sacramento

**Period of Significance:** 1912 **Property Type:** residential hotel, commercial/retail **Applicable Criteria**: A; (Sacramento early 20th century urban cultural and economic expansion event) and C; ( rare remaining example of an important building type in the architectural evolution of the city.)

[Please see Continuation Sheet #B10.Significance]

**B11. Additional Resource Attributes:** HP5



**\*B12. References:**

Groth, Paul, “Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States”, University of California Press, 1994.

Historic Environment Consultants, “Sacramento Survey II: Non-Residential Buildings”, 1980-81.

Historic Environment Consultants, “Downtown Infill Survey”, 2005.

Malinowski, Michael, Applied Architecture, Inc., “Ridgeway Hotel Report”, sketch map floor plans.

Mead & Hunt, “Historic Survey and Evaluation: Ridgeway Hotel at 912-914 12th Street, Sacramento, California”, January 25, 2102.

**B13. Remarks:**

**\*B14. Evaluator:** Paula Boghosian, Historic Environment Cons.

**\*Date of Evaluation:**

November 2012

(This space reserved for official comments.)

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**Recorded by :** Paula Boghosian

**#3a. Description** [continued]

The street level facade of the building on 12th Street currently contains two different commercial units that flank the original entry to the hotel upstairs. The northerly one contains an angled recessed entry off the sidewalk flanked by show windows beneath clerestory windows. The one on the south has show windows beneath the clerestory windows, and an entry flush with the sidewalk. The original hotel entrance was a slightly recessed doorway off the sidewalk that led to the upstairs rooms. This door, located between the two shops, has been closed off from the street with a block of concrete at sidewalk level. The main entrance to the hotel has been shifted through the shop on the south with interior stairs to the upper rooms. Each separate unit has its own entry canopy, including the hotel. The southerly shop’s canopy was originally canvas or metal over an angled metal frame. The small rectangular hotel canopy is trimmed ornamentally and the frame projects from the building with divisions for small hanging colored glass panels, typical of the era. The northerly shop’s canopy is a non-historic shed-roof shaped metal sheet.

Additional alterations include the re-surfacing of the building with stucco in 1927, storefront remodelings, and some wall disturbances to the south and west elevations from the second floor to the top floor.   
An elevator was added to the north end of the west wall in the 1988 remodeling of the building. Evidently there was a ‘notch’ in the west elevation that was filled in to accommodate the elevator. The lines of the infill are visible in the cracking of the exterior stucco.

The stucco on the bays may have been overcoated at that time (1988), perhaps partly due to damage to the bases at the alley from truck impacts over time. Although there is indication that there were bollards in the alley at one time to protect the building, they were removed. There are patches in the alley floor that appear to indicate where they were once located. It appears that their removal has allowed continued damage by trucks to the bases of the bays.

On the south elevation between the westernmost two ‘columns’ of bays, there are disturbances in the stucco at each floor that suggest the possible earlier location of doorway openings to what may have been a fire escape. A second interior fire stair was added to the building in 1988, perhaps removing the necessity of a fire escape on that wall. The 1952 Sanborn map indicates a fire escape on the northern end of the east facade elevation. There is currently no visual evidence of that fire escape. There is an uneven small-vehicle size opening in the brick with a metal roll-up door on the south wall at the alley, near the front of the building that appears to have been added to serve as a trash collection site.

At some unknown time, the street entrance to the upstairs hotel rooms was closed off by a large hunk of poorly formed concrete placed in the doorway to block the entrance. The date is unknown and no permit dates have been determined. This closure appears to have re-routed hotel room access through the ground floor business(es), and was perhaps associated with its change from apartments to residential hotel rooms. There is a recessed opening under the stairs facing the southern ground floor retail area that may have served as a check in point for the hotel.

The physical condition of the building is poor, with deterioration at the bases of the angled bays along the alley, due to damage from impacts of trucks using the alley. There is damage due to heavy use, weather, water intrusion from wall and roof leaks, lack of ongoing maintenance, vandalism, and possible metal salvage damage to equipment, etc.

The date of the installation of the stucco surface was not required in the former Primary 523 form. Additional research to prepare the BSO 523 form revealed the stucco is over 50 years old. A new form has been prepared providing this updated information.

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**#\*B. 10 Significance:** [continued**]**

The Ridgeway Hotel played the dual role of housing both residential and small retail activities, a traditional one in urban settings, and particularly early to mid-century 20th century Sacramento, and portraying an important downtown architectural tradition.

A number of multi-residential apartment dwellings and hotels were constructed before 1959 in the Sacramento downtown area. These structures were vital to the successful evolution and growth of the city and its downtown at a time when the city had limited transportation opportunities. Construction of these types of buildings followed the contours of the economy over time, with more buildings of a popular general style constructed during periods of expansion, and fewer of another style during recessions.

These dwelling units are generally located around the downtown core, to allow people who worked there to walk to work. Many buildings in the central area of the city had rooms and apartments on the upper floors, and shops at street level. People had to walk or take a horse and carriage to market and to work until electric trolleys and autos came along.

Most of the principal markets, shops and work places were located within the central city, and before the automobile, public transportation was critical. As public transportation options expanded, people moved further from the center of the city and walked to the streetcar lines. The first such system was powered by horses that pulled the trolleys. After the city became 'electrified' in 1895, electric-powered streetcars took over, again allowing further expansion, primarily to the east and south.

During the first and second decades of the century, apartment and residential hotel buildings began to appear around the city core, and along transportation lines. They were affordable for most blue and white-collar workers and provided a good housing solution up to and through World War I. The street level of the buildings most often contained various businesses, from markets to offices, repair and various services, barbers, coffee shops and restaurants and shops, while the upstairs areas were largely devoted to residential uses, both long and short term.

During the height of Sacramento’s downtown activity and energy, the city was alive with activity. People both lived and worked there – went to market, school, restaurants and the movies. People in offices and apartments could connect with the street and the outside world through their projecting windows. Photographs of these years show busy streets, cars, people, streetcars –and many of the buildings with projecting bay windows above the street. There were signs and life activities everywhere.

During World War II, housing became a premium since the war precluded the construction of new housing. Many older apartments and single-family houses were divided into smaller units, and additions were made ‑ often without the benefit of any building permits or code inspections. After the War, the "flight to the suburbs" began, and downtown demographics began to reflect the exodus. Some multi-residential units in the downtown fringes, needing residents, became inhabited by lower income residents, contributing in some areas to a downward slide of neighborhood quality. New or remodeled buildings often lacked any efforts regarding design or the retention of existing ornament or comfort, particularly if that increased the costs of the work.

The "International Style" of architecture became popular at that time, and endorsed smooth and unadorned building surfaces and sophisticated balances and proportions of primarily rectangular forms. Reflecting, but not understanding the concepts behind the style, buildings were stripped-down, ornament removed, and facades covered or resurfaced to “modernize” them. The multitude of projecting second-floor bays of inhabited rooms and flats above the street were removed, as tenants flocked from such changes to the comfort and space of the suburbs. Consequently, the least attractive, even stark versions of the International and ‘modern’ style prevailed throughout **Page 5 of 13 Resource Name or #: 912 12th Street; Ridgeway Hotel**

**Recorded by :** Paula Boghosian

much of the downtown core. The "modernization" of the downtown was meant to update it and attract business, when in fact the ‘dehumanization’ of familiar older buildings tended to drive it away. The bays have been a victim of progress reflecting both design and architectural evolution, but also the great demographic and social changes of the city with the loss of downtown residents.

Over time, due in part due to deterioration, remodeling and new development, the number of buildings retaining their original projecting bay windows has greatly diminished, dramatically changing the look of the downtown and its earlier character. Only a handful of buildings currently remain that have retained this important feature. Potential “alley” districts have retained projecting angled bay windows in the alleys behind principal facades for addresses on J and K Streets: 908 J - 926 J/911 K - 923 K Street; and 1018 J - 1027-31 K Street. An additional potential alley district has recently been demolished, further diminishing the number of buildings that still reflect this character-defining feature of downtown Sacramento.

The *Downtown Infill Survey* (Historic Environment Consultants) of 2006 focuses on the construction and architecture of infill structures during the early 20th century through the 1950s, its image and evolution.

# Character-Defining Features of Downtown Historic Sacramento

# In order to retain some of the original character of the downtown city, those features that provide that character as well as a sense of a different era should be identified. (Downtown Infill Survey, p.8)

* Relatively consistent original grid format of numbered and lettered streets.
* Mixture of building ages and styles, reflecting continuing uses from 1848 beginnings to the present.
* Alleys between east-west streets dividing north and south half blocks, are consistently lower in the middle, reflecting the original ground level of the city.
* Remaining vestiges of angled bays on the upper floors of buildings. The facades of many buildings formerly had projecting angled bays on the upper floors for apartments above ground floor retail. Most of these bays were removed after World War II in an effort to ‘modernize’ a receding downtown. These remodelings made dwelling units less desirable due to flat building fronts and less visible street activity, further changing the upper floor occupancy of downtown building from residential to office/commercial. There are some remaining vestiges of this design feature in the alley facades of buildings facing the streets, mostly in some locations between 9th and 12th Streets, J and K.
* Remaining two and three story building heights along major historic downtown streets, associated with original 20’ or 40’ x 160’ building parcels, and creating a sense of original scale dependent on both the height and width of nineteenth or early twentieth century buildings. These remnants occur generally between 7th-12th Streets along J and K Streets.
* Vestiges of hollow underground areas beneath sidewalks reflecting the original level of the city
* Remaining granite curbstones in some locations.
* Remaining iron rings embedded in granite curbs for tying horse reins; along 8th Street between I and J, for example.

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**Recorded by :** Paula Boghosian

**Significance:**

The Ridgeway Hotel is significant as a rare early 20th century remnant of an important downtown era that reflects the city’s surge of economic growth and sense of self that evolved at that time. It was part of the emerging “City Beautiful” movement that occurred in many cities of this era, and communities strongly supported public demonstrations of their pride with the construction of beautiful buildings and evident symbols of prosperity. At that time, the popularity of the city generated a need for additional housing both for residents and visitors. New residential buildings met the needs of many who worked and lived in the downtown area in a variety of jobs with varied financial compensation. Housing for those responding to this growth was needed in various economic ranges, and was provided with apartments above store fronts, hotels and a variety of residential hotel and rooming house offerings. As such, they were a response to a “golden age” of Sacramento’s history, when its ‘heart’ was the downtown area.

The Hotel is also an increasingly rare example of a type of urban residential architecture popular with downtown residents at that time. The building was designed with a number of projecting angled bays that originally reflected Italianate styles of the 19th century, but in a later urban setting provided tenants with a vital visual contact with the community and city below. The building is one of the very few remaining downtown structures to have retained its projecting window bays – an architectural feature once predominant in the downtown area which contained a number of apartments and offices above the commercial ground floor establishments. This feature embodies distinctive characteristics of a period of architectural design in downtown Sacramento, once prominent and now rare.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, architectural styles turned toward Modern and International Style styles which celebrated simple designs, plain surfaces, and no decorative ornamentation. In order to stay current with then contemporaneous society updated styles, and efforts to slow down the loss of business to the suburbs, many property owners removed the bay windows and building ornamentation. This resulted in less attractive places to live in and increased the loss of residents. Over time, those buildings that had retained bay windows found them difficult to maintain and not a strong enough attribute to stem the exodus to the suburbs. In a city whose buildings once contained many projecting bay windows, there are now very few such examples of that era and its phenomenon. The Ridgeway Hotel is a rare representative of the architectural design of that era and its cultural and social expression. It represents a building type that was very prominent in the city’s past, and is an important remnant that provides an understanding to the public of the visual character of Sacramento during most of the twentieth century, and its cultural and social counterpart.

**History**

The building was constructed by W.S.Simmon(d)s in 1912, and in 1913 opened as the Del Paso Apartments.

By 1915, there was an ice cream factory on the first floor. In 1924-1926, a cleaners business occupied the 912 12TH Street storefront. In 1926, a delicatessen moved into 914 12th, but by 1931-32, the storefront was vacant . In 1933, the name of the hotel changed to the Hotel Ridgeway, and the Generator Exchange and Supply Co. , and F.G.Meilike Insurance agent became storefront tenants. During the early 1940s, there was a succession of minor tenants such as Brazel Auto Parts, an insurance agent, Jacuzzi Bros. Pumps, and cleaners. However by 1947, a music company moved in, the C & H Music Store, with varied related products, and it remained until the 1980s. In 1988, the building was remodeled and an elevator added. A tattoo shop was installed in the northern retail space.

The interior of the building that is accessible to the public includes the street level business/commercial areas below the upper residential units. This space, currently divided into two segments, is the only publicly accessible space in the building. It has been much altered but the store front windows and clerestory windows remain. A large piece of concrete still closes off the original access to the upstairs units between the two shop areas.

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While the building has been re-surfaced with a stucco coating, that surface has been in place for 85 years. It is the image that has been in public view and modification of its character could be considered an impact to its evolutionary character. Since the stucco texture has become associated with the image of the building by the public for 85 years, removing it may not be advised as it has become a character-defining feature. It reflects the life of an urban place and the changes that take place over time in a living city.

Character-defining features of the Ridgeway Hotel building include the following elements.

These features constitute elements of the building that contribute importantly to the character and appearance that create its significance.

Residential building type with units above street level businesses at ground level

Projecting angled bays in upper units, a derivation of Italianate design of the 19th century then common in Sacramento

Roof form with overhang supported by decorative beam ends beneath enclosed soffits

Storefront business show windows with clerestory windows above

Stucco surfacing and resulting changes in the visual definition of architectural features of the building; texture

Interior stairway to upper level visible within store front

Narrow interior upper floor hallways, and doors with original transoms, now blocked

Distinctive alley elevation with projecting angled bays

Two interior light wells (not visible by public)

**Summary:**

The Ridgeway Hotel appears to be eligible to the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources under

Criteria a; it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history of the city, region, state or nation; and

Criteria c; it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period of construction, or method of construction.

Additionally, the property retains:

A: integrity of location, design, setting, interior workmanship and association,

B: significant architectural worth, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate, and necessary to promote, protect, and further the goals and purposes of the Historic Preservation Chapter of the City Code.

The Ridgeway Hotel is a rare remaining representative of a significant architectural expression of the “golden” era of Sacramento’s downtown vitality and its cultural and social expression. It represents a building type that was very prominent in the city’s past, and is an important remnant that provides an understanding to the public of the visual character of Sacramento during most of the twentieth century. Significantly visually, the building type also provided the basis for the active life that drove the city, providing both critical and appealing living opportunities and a vital economic base.

The Hotel is also an increasingly rare example of a type of urban residential architecture popular with downtown residents at that time. The building was designed with a number of projecting angled bays that originally reflected Italianate styles of the 19th century, but in a later urban setting provided tenants with a vital visual contact with the community and city below. The building is one of the very few remaining downtown structures to have retained its projecting window bays – an architectural feature once predominant in the thriving downtown hub of the early to mid-century era in Sacramento and significant character-defining element of that core.