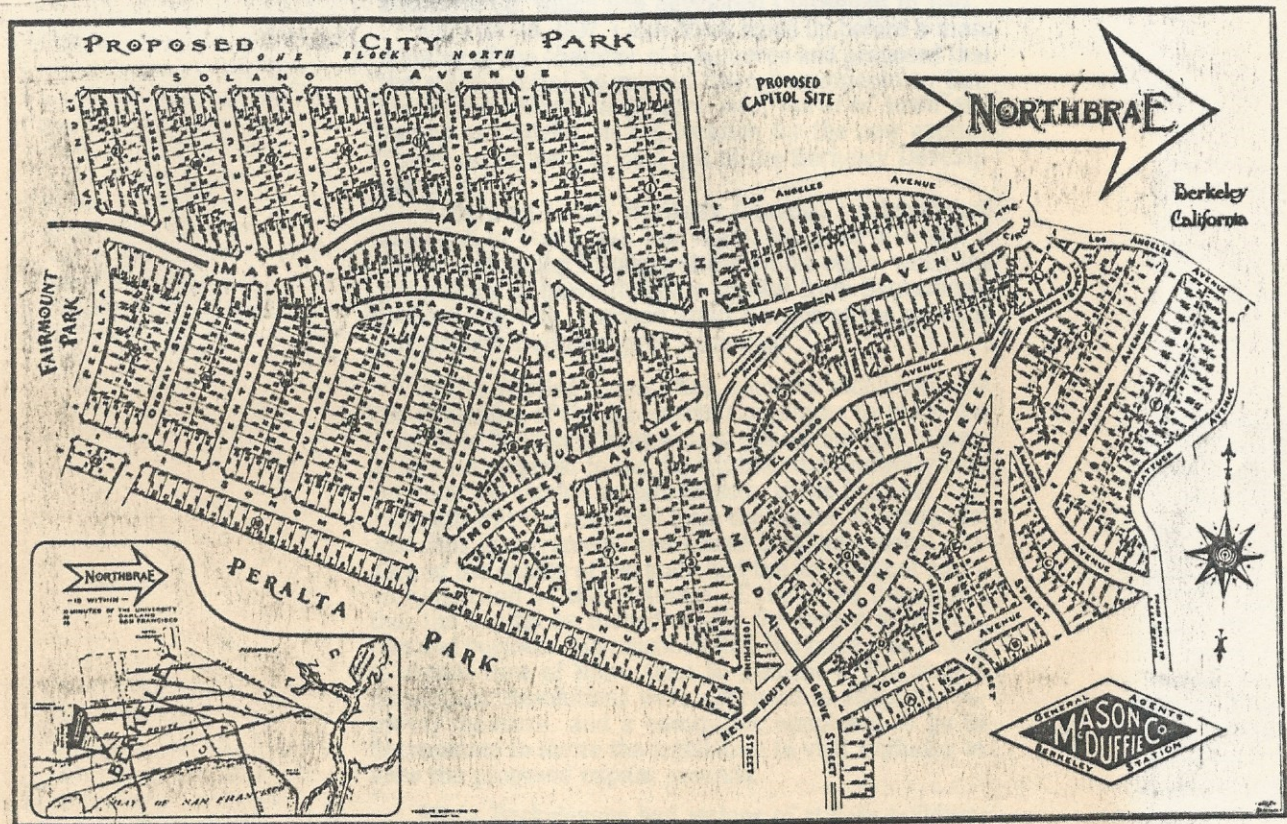


## Berkeley's history

# How Berkeley almost became the state capital



Imagine a Berkeley that was not only the home of the University of California, but the site of the state capital as well. That's just what a group of Berkeley citizens hoped would happen when they launched an ambitious effort to move the state capital from Sacramento to Berkeley in 1907.

Seventy-three years ago today the city was in the midst of a daring campaign to wrench the state capital from Sacramento.

Berkeleyans who opened their *Gazettes* on March 2, 1907 found this headline in the center of the front page: "Berkeley Wins Battle for Capital in Assembly."

Although many people were involved in the attempt, it is a chapter of Berkeley history that few people know anything about today. It was an audacious attempt, but failed. Berkeley missed becoming the state capital by only 33,000 votes statewide. The proposal was defeated, and the capital remained in Sacramento. The land that had been set aside for the Capitol building was subdivided and sold as residential lots, and most traces of the scheme vanished from the city.

But the best part of the story isn't the eventual defeat of what became known as the Capital Removal Measure, but rather in the boldness of the proposal itself and in the attempt to determine, 73 years later, what motivated those who thought up the idea in the first place.