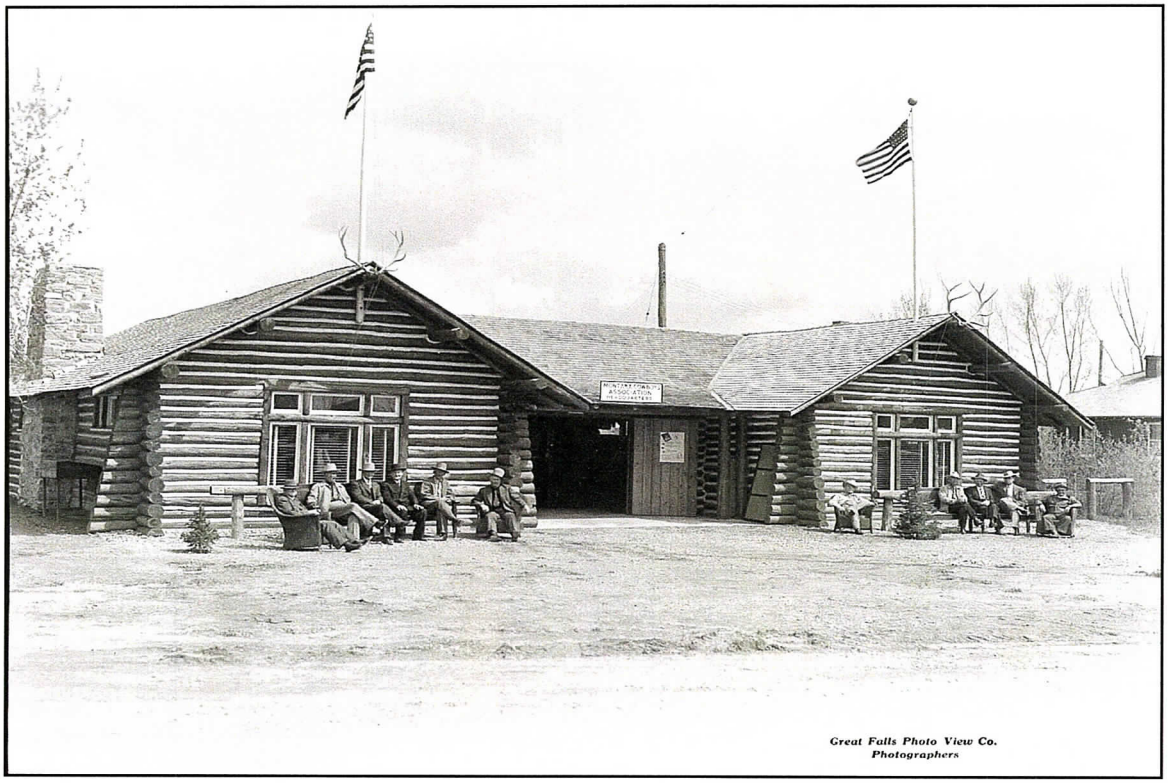
WEST BANK URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

Cultural Resource Inventory and Evaluation



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WEST BANK URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT, GREAT FALLS, MONTANA: CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY AND EVALUATION

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October 2009



Explore and Enjoy Our Heritage

This project was funded in part by a matching grant from the Preserve America program. Preserve America is a federal initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the program include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Detailed information on all aspects of this initiative can be found at **www.preserveamerica.gov**.

One of Preserve America's underlying premises is that sound historic preservation practices stimulate and strength a community's economic vitality. Providing matching grants for local preservation projects is one of several major components of the Preserve American program.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the City of Great Falls, Montana began to study the infrastructure and development issues related to a portion of the city known as West Bank. The area, located across the Missouri River from the city's Central Business District, had seen historic use for a variety of primarily industrial activities, and also served as a transportation corridor. Many of these uses were in decline by the early 21st Century, however, leaving a legacy of decaying buildings, under-utilized land, and potential environmental issues. (Figure 1, on the following page, is a location map of the West Bank area.)

A professional contractor prepared a document titled the "West Bank Urban Renewal Plan" for the city the following year. The document identified a number of current planning issues related to the West Bank area, including building deterioration, inappropriately mixed property uses, an inadequate street layout, and potential life-safety matters. In March 2007 the City Commission enacted its Ordnance 2967, which adopted the plan.[1]

The Plan noted the existence of potentially significant "historic and cultural resources" within the West Bank area, and recommended that a cultural resources inventory of the area be performed. Accordingly, in early 2009 the City of Great Falls contracted with Renewable Technologies, Inc. (RTI) for the completion of such an inventory. This report is a primary product of RTI's work in the West Bank area; in addition, a "Montana Cultural Resources Information System" site form was completed for each cultural resource located by the inventory.

RTI inventoried the entire project area to locate and record all cultural resources within the defined West Bank area. Because of the area's urban setting and long history of intensive Euro-American use, the inventory was focused on the standing buildings and structures in the area, although less-developed areas with a potential to reveal archaeological remnants were also examined. This inventory resulted in the recordation of a total of 32 architectural sites, each including one or more standing buildings. An historic bridge across the Missouri River was also recorded. Twenty-two of the sites included buildings and/or structures that were over 50 years old in 2009; in contrast, the buildings at two of the recorded sites were still under construction in 2009. The bridge and four of the architectural sites were found to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and a tentative National Register historic district was identified in the area of the eligible buildings. No historic or prehistoric archaeological sites were identified.

The remainder of this document outlines the full results of RTI's cultural resource inventory. The report includes a discussion of the area's geographic setting, as well as a brief historic overview of the project area. (No prehistoric context is included because there are no related sites in the project area.) The field methods employed for this inventory and the summarized results of RTI's survey are presented in the final sections of the report.

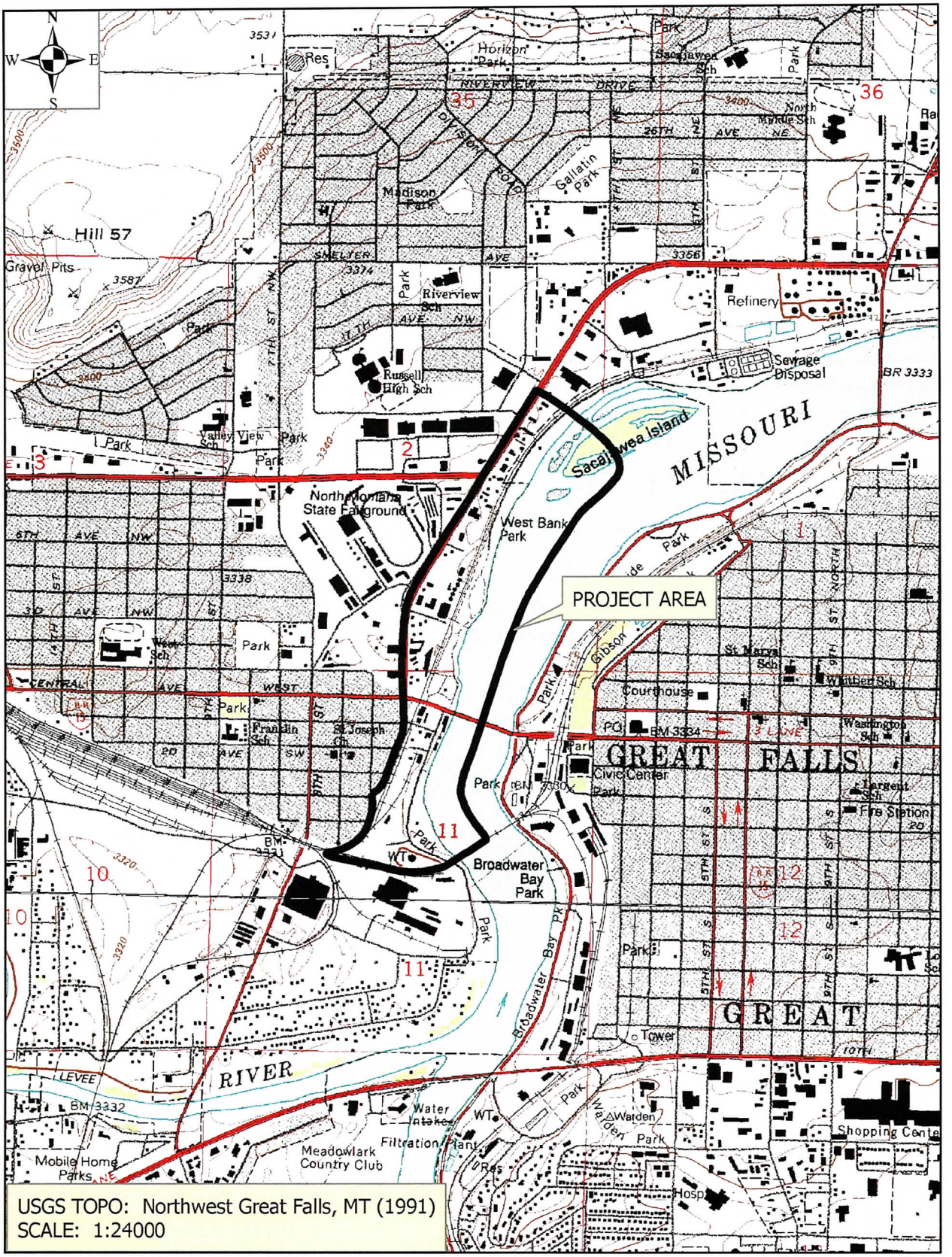


Figure 1. Overview map showing the boundaries of the West Bank Urban Renewal District.

GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

The project area is located within the corporate limits of the City of Great Falls, in central Cascade County, Montana. Great Falls is primarily located along the bottomlands of the Missouri River, which flows in an overall southwest-northeast direction through the area. The river valley is irregularly shaped and relatively narrow, with prominent hills visible to the north and west. The Sun River flows into the Missouri from the northwest, with the confluence just south of the project area. Riverbanks are largely developed as gently-sloping parkland, though higher cutbanks exist to the north and south. The approximate average elevation of the city is 3330 feet (1015 meters).

The entire region rests on beds of sedimentary rock that formed on the floor of an ancient inland sea. This sea, which inundated much of Montana periodically for nearly 600 million years, began to recede to the east as the Cretaceous Period drew to a close. Sediment laid down along the margins of the retreating sea formed the sandstone, siltstone, and shale bedrock of the project area. Soils in the area are moderately deep and well-drained, and prior to urban development had the potential to support productive range and crop lands.[2]

The area is broadly characterized as a short grass prairie, though little native vegetation remains in the West Bank area. Prior to human intervention, flora would have included a variety of grassland subtypes. Riparian vegetation along the Missouri and Sun Rivers might have included isolated stands of cottonwood and willow, along with other trees and shrubs. Today, non-native grasses dominate in undeveloped West Bank tracts.[3]

The region has a dry continental climate with generally warm summer temperatures. Winter is characterized by periods of very cold weather influenced by Arctic air masses from the north and northeast. These cold spells alternate with Chinook winds that bring warmer air to the area. The region is relatively arid, and most precipitation falls in the spring and early summer.

The entire project area is in an urban setting today, and has been so since the first third of the twentieth century. The land is used for a very diverse mix of commercial, industrial, residential, recreational, and transportation functions. Most of the immediate riverbank area is designated as parkland.

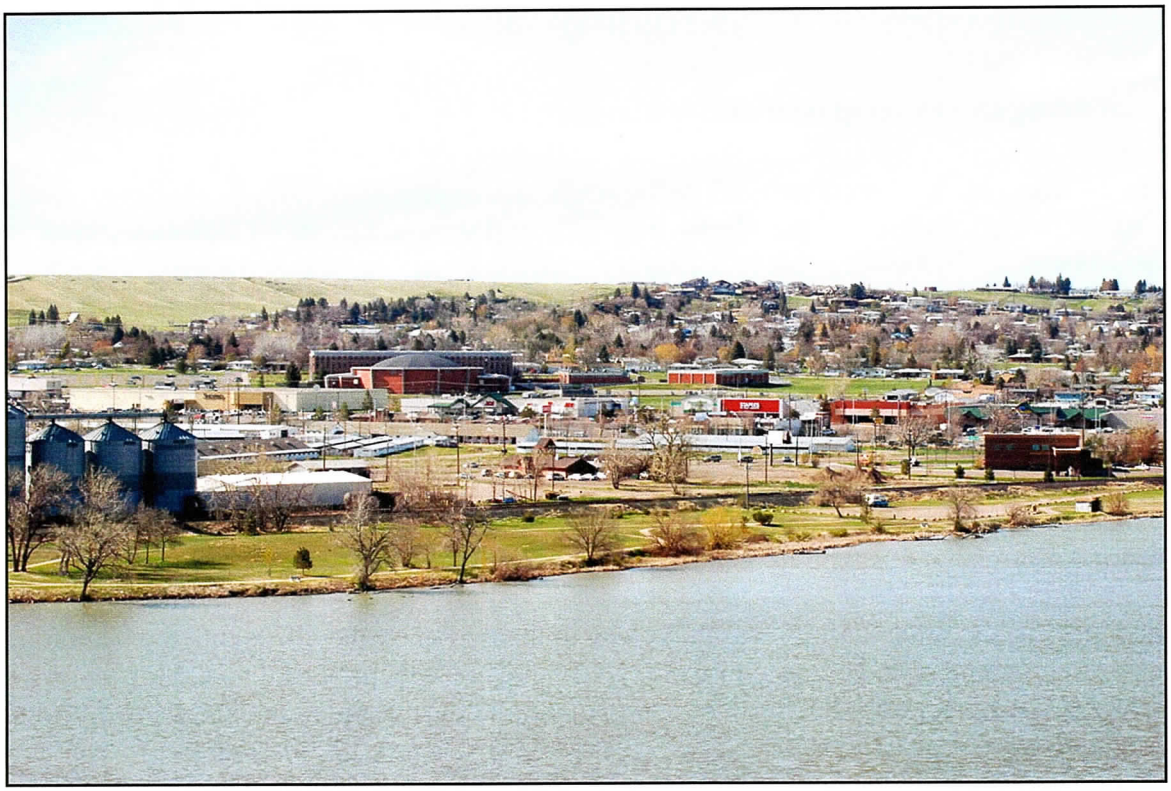


Figure 2. The northern portion of the West Bank area. View to northeast.



Figure 3. The central portion of the West Bank area, with the Staybridge Suites Hotel to the left. View to west.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

The Founding and Development of Great Falls

The first Euro-American incursions into north-central Montana were early but largely transitory, with travel heavily focused on the Missouri River corridor. The Lewis & Clark expedition traveled upstream on the Missouri in the summer of 1805, with some members of the party returning down the river the following year. (The party's 1805 visit was highlighted by Captain Lewis' unexpected encounter with a grizzly bear, at what is now called Sacajawea Island.) During the following decades gradually increasing numbers of Euro-American trappers and traders utilized the area, but little permanent settlement took place until the mid Nineteenth Century. The town of Fort Benton, some 40 miles downstream on the Missouri, was the initial focus of Euro-American activity in the region, as the head of river navigation and the eastern terminus of the Mullan Road. The river valley remained a travel route, however, particularly during and after the 1860s mining boom in southwestern Montana. [4]

Cattle ranching and other activity was underway in the region by the 1870s, but the beginning of the city of Great Falls can be traced to 1882, when an entrepreneur named Paris Gibson arrived in the area. Gibson realized the location's potential as a transportation hub and industrial center, and saw the hydroelectric potential of the Missouri River falls. With the support of James J. Hill, the driving force behind the Great Northern Railway, Gibson platted the Great Falls townsite in 1883. Located on the east side of the Missouri River, above the namesake falls, the city was designed for growth, with a large rectangular grid of broad streets and avenues.[5]

Settlement began in earnest at Great Falls in 1884, and the town grew rapidly. The community's success was all but assured in the fall of 1887, when a corporate predecessor of the Great Northern completed a railway line into Great Falls and established an operations base there. By 1890 the city boasted a population of 3,979, a silver smelter was in operation, a hydroelectric dam was under construction, and a coal-mining district was being developed to the south.[6]

The early 1890s were a boom period for Great Falls, solidifying the city's position as the commercial and industrial hub of central Montana. By far the most important development of the period was the construction of the Boston & Montana copper smelter at Black Eagle, immediately north of the city. This large facility, later owned and operated by the Anaconda Company, provided hundreds of blue-collar jobs for Great Falls and remained one of the city's largest employers for over 80 years. Construction of additional railroad lines to the city continued, as well, and agricultural use of the surrounding countryside increased rapidly during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1900 Great Falls boasted 14,930 inhabitants, and was the second-largest city in Montana.[7]

The first half of the twentieth century saw two other significant developments contribute to Great Falls' continued growth. The hydroelectric development of the Missouri River waterfalls proceeded rapidly during the early 1900s, particularly in the 1910s, and Great Falls became informally known as "The Electric City." These new facilities provided power for residential and commercial use across much of Montana, as well as for the Black Eagle smelter and the electrification of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad. The World War II years

saw national defense assume a large role in the economic life of Great Falls. The Great Falls Army Air Field saw wartime service as a training facility for bomber pilots, and was expanded in later years to become today's Malmstrom Air Force Base. The base soon became the city's single largest economic force, and its presence helped make Great Falls the largest city in Montana in both the 1950 and 1960 census. The city's population peaked at 60,091 in 1970, although by that time Billings had succeeded Great Falls as Montana's largest city.[8]

By the early twentieth century Great Falls had established itself as the commercial, civic, and governmental hub of central Montana, and it has retained that status ever since. The city has been a rail transportation center since the late 1880s, and later became a major highway and aviation hub, as well. It is the largest financial, commercial and industrial center in central Montana, and home of a federal courthouse. Both the Montana State Fair and the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind have been located in Great Falls since the 1930s.[9]

Many of these historical attributes and influences remain in Great Falls in 2009, although the city's industrial base has faded in recent decades. The copper smelter in Black Eagle closed in 1980, railroad employment has dropped significantly, and other industries have also faded. Simultaneously, the end of the Cold War saw significant decreases in operations at Malmstrom Air Force Base. These developments have caused the city's population to stagnate, but it remains the largest community in central Montana, an important economic force, and the center of a vast and prosperous agricultural region.

History of the West Bank Area

Early Settlement and Use

The West Bank area is across the Missouri River from the original platted city of Great Falls, and was thus physically separated from much of the city's nineteenth-century residential and civic development. This combination of proximity and separation apparently made the West Bank an attractive home for some of the city's poorest and most transient early residents, though the documentation of these uses is fragmentary, at best.

The first known reference to a residence on the river's bank, although whether on the west or east side is uncertain, was Paris Gibson's account of "a half-decayed log cabin in a thick clump of willows at the water's edge."[10] He attributed the cabin, which he observed in 1882, to American Fur Company trappers. Gibson also noted that, just shortly before his 1882 visit to the future site of Great Falls, some cattlemen had erected a few log cabins "on the West side of the Missouri River, and adjacent to Sun River."[11]

The west bank of the Missouri River was also the site of a small settlement called Johnstown (or "John's Town"). Initially settled in about 1883 and platted the following year, Johnstown was the first attempt at formal townsite development in the future Great Falls area. While the Johnstown community reportedly boasted a store, saloon, and post office during the mid-1880s, the townsite was quickly eclipsed by Great Falls and was not ultimately successful. Its precise location is not known today, although it was probably at the far south end of the West Bank study area, extending into the land that was later occupied by the Great Northern roundhouse and

shops. An 1891 perspective map of Great Falls shows a collection of several houses at the river's west bank near the approximate Johnstown site. A seasonal ferry also operated for a few years in the same vicinity.[12]

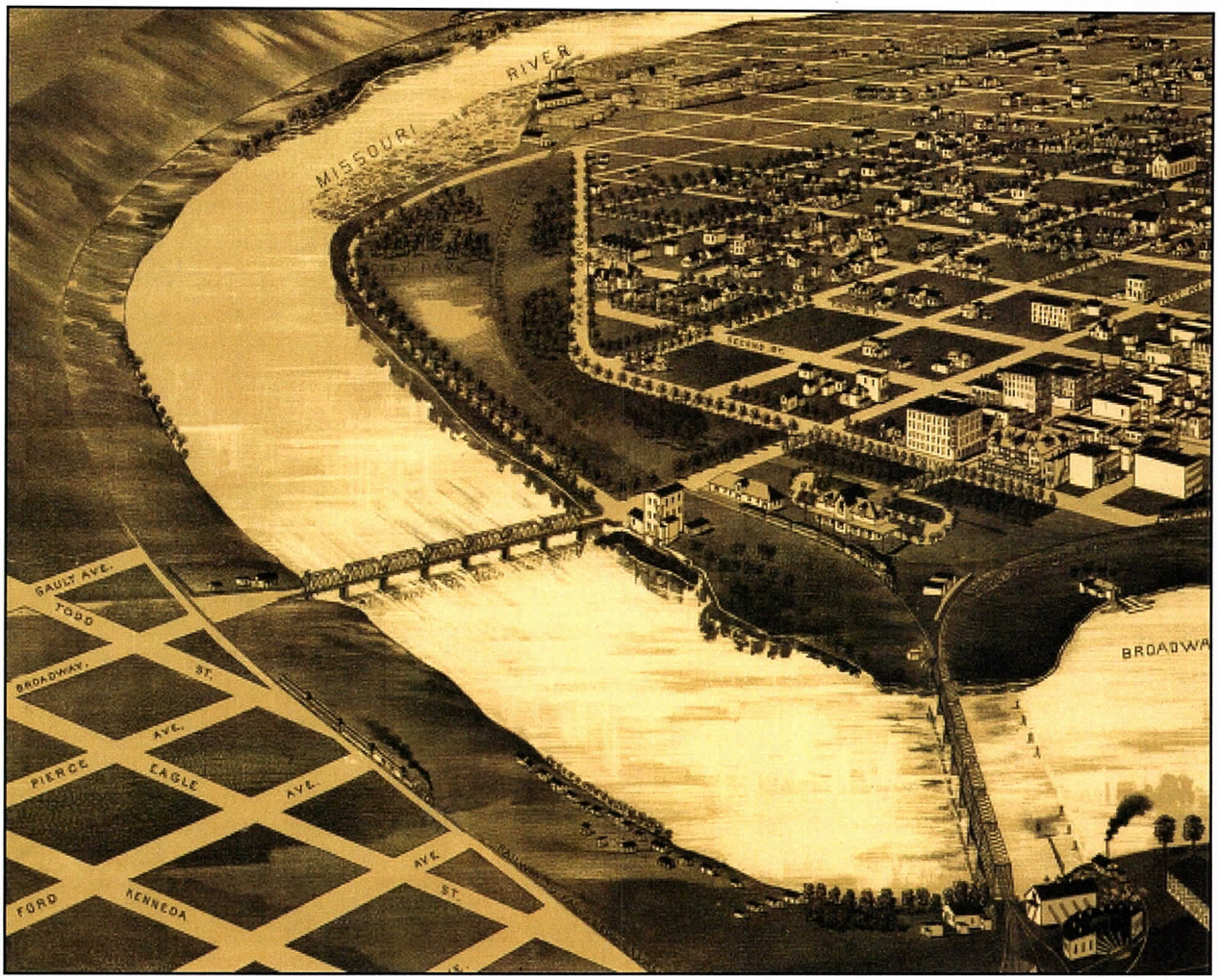


Figure 4. Detail from an 1891 perspective sketch of Great Falls, showing early development in the West Bank area.

Cree Indians lived on the west bank of the Missouri River from at least the turn of the twentieth century into the late 1920s. The *Great Falls Leader* reported in 1904 that Chief Little Bear and his band of about 100 had returned to "the old barren Indian camping ground across the river below West Great Falls," indicating they had stayed there several years previous as well. At that time, the Chippewa Cree were landless; they were not granted a reservation until 1916 when the small Rocky Boy Reservation was set aside between Great Falls and Havre.[13]

Even after the reservation was established, Cree Indians continued to live on the West Bank initially because rations distributed on the reservation were insufficient to sustain their families. The numbers of Cree at the camp varied, with reports between 20 and perhaps more than 50 occupants. Attempts by community leaders to route the Cree from their West Bank camp were

unsuccessful. Through the 1920s, living conditions were poor with food and medical services in short supply, but in most cases the press reported that the residents had some form of subsistence. The houses themselves were tents and somewhat more permanent buildings labeled "shacks."[14]

The sources consulted make no mention of Cree shanties at West Bank after the late 1920s, and so it is possible that the Indians were finally forced from the area. The Cree were not the last to reside along the river at the West Bank, however. For an unknown period, but at least extending into the 1970s, that section between Central Avenue and the Great Northern Railway shops was locally known as "a hobo jungle." Transients lived among the willows at the river's edge until the brush was cleared to discourage transient camping.[15] So-called hobo jungles were common at many places in the western United States at least as early as the 1930s, and it is possible that the river bank camp among the willows was decades old.

Industrial and Transportation Development

Use of the West Bank area for industrial and transportation purposes dates from the first decade of urban development in Great Falls, and was at least in part a product of the pattern of railway construction in the area. The first railroad constructed into Great Falls was the "St. Paul, Minneapolis & Manitoba Railway Company," a predecessor of the Great Northern (GN); it built from North Dakota through Havre and on to Great Falls during a marathon construction season in 1887. The line entered the Great Falls area from the north, on an alignment well west of the Missouri River, and later continued southward towards Helena and Butte. Although the railway soon built a Missouri River bridge in Great Falls to access the city proper (and perhaps more importantly, the coalfields southeast of town), the company's shop facilities and primary yard were constructed west of the river where undeveloped land was more readily available. The GN greatly expanded its shop facilities in Great Falls during the early twentieth century, constructing a massive building complex near the west end of its Missouri River bridge, immediately south of the West Bank study area. A successor bridge and many of the railroad's shop buildings remain there today.[16]

By 1890, the GN constructed a 5-mile spur track running northward from its Great Falls shops area to the Boston & Montana smelter site at Black Eagle. The entire spur paralleled the west bank of the Missouri River, running the length of the West Bank study area. The track saw immediate and heavy use hauling ore shipments and concentrates to and from the smelter, and made the railroad a predominate presence in the West Bank area. The railway's West Bank land holdings extended in places well beyond the land needed for the spur itself, providing the potential for future railroad-related industrial development. Simultaneously, the GN's strong presence in the area helped preclude subdivision or other types of development in the vicinity.

A second railroad also arrived in the Great Falls area in 1890. The Great Falls and Canada Railway (GF&C) was a narrow-gauge line funded by Canadian interests, connecting the city with coalfields in the Lethbridge, Alberta area. Though little information about the railroad's Great Falls operations are known, the line apparently first at Willard, about a mile west of the GN's yard. The GF&C entered the West Bank area directly in 1895, constructing a line eastward along the northern side of the Sun River valley, and then turning south into the West Bank area.

The final stretch of this extension paralleled the GN's Black Eagle spur, and a large facility was built there to transload coal and other shipments from narrow-gauge to standard-gauge freight cars. This facility was in West Bank, probably near Central Avenue. Its period of use was relatively brief; the GF&C was converted to standard gauge on January 1, 1903, and the line was sold to the GN the following year. The original GF&C trackage in Great Falls was soon abandoned, and no trace remains of the transloading facility today.[17]

The third and final railroad constructed in the West Bank area was a predecessor company of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad ("the Milwaukee Road"), which built a line into Great Falls from the east in 1913. The railroad bridged the Missouri River at Central Avenue the following year, and constructed a network of interchange tracks with the GN in the West Bank area, primarily to allow some Black Eagle smelter shipments to be routed via the Milwaukee Road. This trackage existed until 1980, when the Milwaukee ended its local operations.[18]

Non-railway industrial development also began to take place in the West Bank area during the last years of the nineteenth century, lured both by the availability of rail transport and the abundance of undeveloped land, both in close proximity to the rapidly-expanding urban center of Great Falls. The most significant early industrial project in West Bank was the Montana Brewing Company, which was established in 1898. The company built a large, Gothic-detailed brewery on the west shore of the river just north of Central Avenue, and by 1900 was utilizing locally-grown barley to produce 200 barrels of beer a day. The building was a Great Falls landmark throughout the early twentieth century. Its site is now occupied by the Missouri River Federal Courthouse.[19]

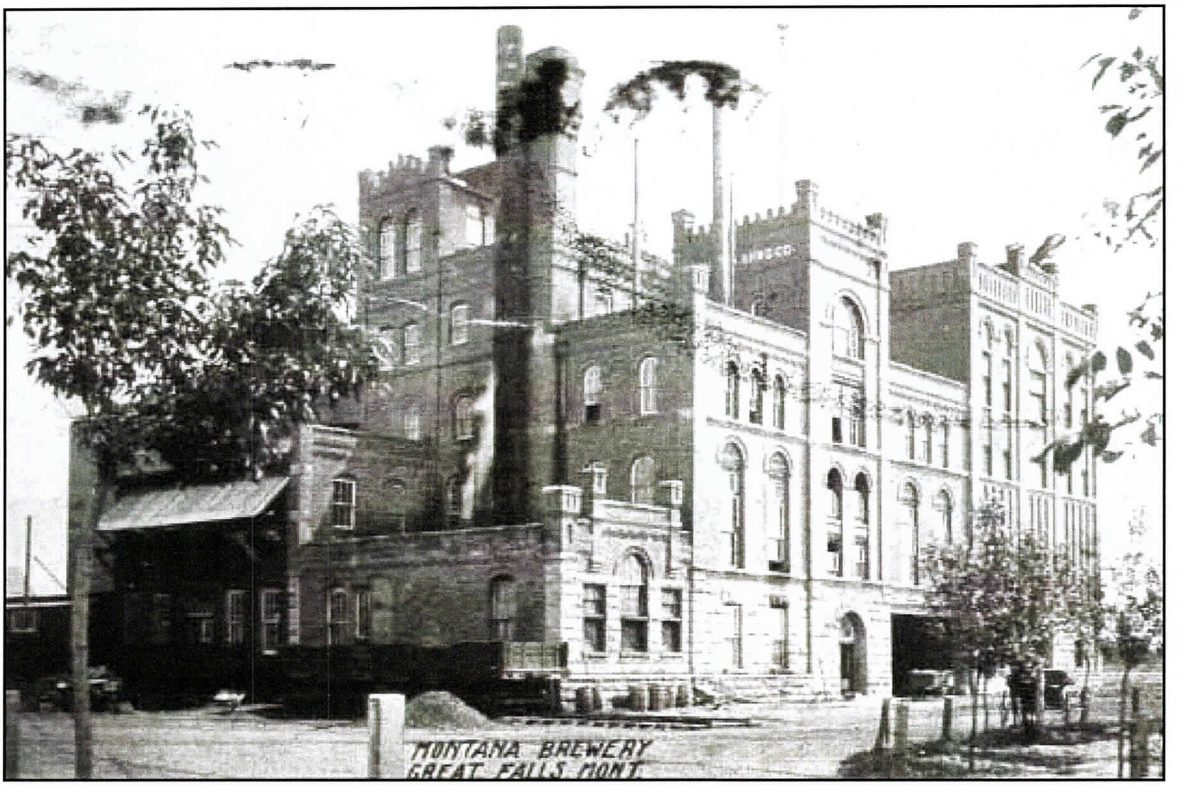


Figure 5. Early photograph of the Montana Brewing Company's Great Falls facility.

What was to be the largest industrial development in the West Bank area was constructed a few hundred feet to the north of the Montana Brewing Company in 1923. That year, the Sunburst Refining Company erected a large oil refining complex of stills, condensers and tanks along the GN's Black Eagle spur. Sunburst was one of three refineries erected in Great Falls following the discovery of rich high gravity oil at the Kevin-Sunburst Field, about 85 miles north of the city. The region's oil boom was short-lived, however, and the Sunburst refinery closed in 1933, apparently in the face of bankruptcy. The refining plant, oil storage tanks and most other facilities were dismantled soon thereafter, although at least two ancillary buildings from the facility remain. The Montana Specialty Mills complex now occupies a portion of the refinery site, and other portions of the property became part of a large shop complex used by Cascade County.[20]



Figure 6. A 1930s view of the central West Bank area, showing the Sunburst Oil Refinery are other industrial development. The cars parked in the foreground belong to visitors attending the Montana State Fair.

Despite these developments, much of the land in the West Bank area apparently remained undeveloped through at least the 1920s. The 1930s and 1940s, however, saw substantial small-scale industrial development in the area, primarily on railroad-owned land in the southern part of West Bank. South of Central Avenue, much of the West Bank area remained railroad-owned until late in the twentieth century, and maps of the period show a small network of railroad spur tracks serving a variety of industries built on lots leased from the GN. Many of these businesses appeared to be related to petroleum distribution. Construction firms also located in the area, and the Montana State Highway Commission built and operated a large shop complex there. By the 1940s, other industrial firms occupied land north of Central, as well. Among the endeavors was a company that manufactured corrugated-metal Quonset buildings – several examples of which still exist in and near the West Bank area.

While the West Bank area remained a primarily industrial locale throughout its history, some of the land did see other use. A factor in this was the 1931 establishment of the Northern Montana Fairgrounds complex on a large tract of land just across Third Street from the West Bank area. Substantial development took place at the fairgrounds during the 1930s and beyond, drawing visitor attention to the area for the first time. This, combined with the increasing use of the automobile and the fact that US Highway 89 passed through the area (on Central Avenue) resulted in the construction of a small number of travel-related businesses in the West Bank in the mid-twentieth century, including at least one gas station, a bar, and two motels.[21]

The West Bank's proximity to the fairgrounds may have also helped encourage the construction of what is perhaps the best-known building in the West Bank area: the Cowboys Bar and Museum. Constructed as a public works project in 1940 by workers for the National Youth

Administration, the building is the home of the Montana Cowboys Association, a well-known local fraternal group. Land for the building site was donated by William Shea, a Great Falls civic leader and the owner of an adjacent residence – the only purpose-built house in the twentieth-century West Bank.

Non-industrial land uses in the West Bank area remained relatively minimal, however, until well after World War II. During the 1960s, 1970s, and beyond, commercial development in Great Falls underwent a significant growth and outward expansion, the focus shifting from the historic Central Business District to more outlying areas with available land and good highway access. The northwestern portion of Great Falls was a primary beneficiary of this trend during the last third of the twentieth century, and heavy commercial growth took place in the area, particularly along the northern portion of Third Street Northwest.

This increasing urbanization was countered somewhat by a push to convert much of the immediate riverbank area to parkland, a compliment to the parks that had existed on the Missouri's eastern bank for decades. The first designated parkland in the West Bank area was Sacajawea Island (then called Gibson Island), which the Montana Department of State Lands leased to the City of Great Falls for park purposes beginning in 1931. Most of the remaining riverbank parkland in the West Bank area was deeded to the city by the Montana Power Company in 1969. The area was formally dedicated as a park in 1978, and in 1998 the former Milwaukee Road bridge across the Missouri was converted to pedestrian use, linking the parkland on the two sides of the river.[22]

By the early 21st century commercial development pressure was gradually extending southward towards former industrial properties. The establishment of the West Bank Urban Renewal District promises to accelerate this trend. The first major construction projects associated with the creation of the district – the new federal courthouse and a large hotel building – have already significantly changed the character of a portion of West Bank. Further changes seem assured, and it is likely that much of the area's remaining industrial landscape will soon be greatly altered.



Figure 7. The Cowboys Bar and Museum, soon after construction.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

RTI began work on the West Bank project on April 22, 2009, when staff professional Mark Hufstetler visited Great Falls to conduct a reconnaissance survey of the project area. During this visit, Hufstetler met with City of Great Falls staff to discuss the project, and conducted a "windshield" inventory of the West Bank to determine project scope and prepare a tentative site list. This reconnaissance identified a total of 33 historic sites for recordation, including 32 architectural sites and a former railroad bridge.

Most of the remaining project fieldwork was conducted by Mark Hufstetler, Mitzi Rossillon, and Mary McCormick during the week of May 11, 2009. Hufstetler and McCormick conducted a field recordation of all sites at the intensive level, with the exception of three sites where they were denied access by Cascade County (the property owner). This inventory focused on collecting sufficient information to determine site significance according to the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and included mapping, photography, and the preparation of a narrative description.

This fieldwork was supplemented by historic research designed to obtain site-specific information, as well as develop a broader overview of the area's Euro-American historical development. Research materials were reviewed at the Great Falls Public Library and the Great Falls History Museum, deed records were examined at the Cascade County Clerk & Recorders Office, and appraisal/assessment information was obtained from the County Appraisal Office. Some additional information was obtained through interviews with West Bank property owners and businesspeople.

During the fieldwork week, Rossillon also completed an informal pedestrian survey of those portions of the West Bank area deemed to have a relative probability of retaining visible archaeological resources. Emphasis was placed on riverbank locations that might have exposed cutbanks or may have been the locations of historic activity. No surface evidence of archaeological resources was found, likely due to the strong and repeated historic disturbance of most West Bank land.

Hufstetler conducted a final site visit in June 2009, to record the three properties that could not be accessed during the earlier visit. He also completed additional project research at that time, and conducted a formal oral history interview with three members of the Montana Cowboys Association, the owners of the Cowboys Bar and Museum.

The field data for each recorded site was synthesized on a "Montana Historic Property Record" form. Forms for those properties that are 50 years of age or older were submitted to the Archaeological Records office at the University of Montana in Missoula, and Smithsonian site numbers were assigned to those properties. Following instructions received from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, the forms for more recent properties did not receive Smithsonian numbers, but were instead assigned arbitrary field numbers. Summaries of all final site forms are provided at the end of this report.

SURVEY RESULTS

As noted above, the RTI survey for this project identified and recorded a total of 33 sites, 22 of which included buildings or structures more than 50 years old. Smithsonian site numbers were assigned to those sites containing features more than 50 years old, while arbitrary field numbers were assigned to sites that contained only newer features. The primary features at five of the 33 sites were found to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 1, below, lists (from north to south) the 33 sites recorded by RTI. Figure 8, on page 16, is a locator map of the sites.

Table 1: List of sites recorded by RTI in the West Bank area.

Smithsonian number	Field number	Historic Name	Eligibility
	RTI-01	O'Reilly Automotive	no
	RTI-02	Walgreens Drug Store	no
	RTI-03	Fromicove Manufacturing & Distributing	no
24CA1381		Union Oil Company Warehouse	no
24CA1382		Johnson Distributing Company	no
	RTI-04	Cascade Veterinary Supply Company	no
24CA1383		Goodell Veterinary Hospital	no
	RTI-05	Stockman Bank	no
24CA1384		Stockman's Club	no
	RTI-06	Cascade County Solid Waste Department	no
24CA1385		Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed	no
24CA1386		Cascade County Disaster and Emergency Services	no
24CA1387		Cascade County Public Works Warehouse	yes
24CA1388		Sunburst Oil Office	yes
24CA1389		Cowboys Bar and Museum	yes
24CA1390		William and Isabel Shea House	yes
	RTI-07	Staybridge Suites Hotel	no
24CA1391		James Talcott Construction	no
24CA1392		Montana Steel Building Company	no
24CA1393		Pat Motel	no
24CA1394		Coleman Service and Repair	no
	RTI-08	Pizza Hut Delivery Building	no
	RTI-09	Missouri River Federal Courthouse	no
24CA1395		Ferris-Killion Implement Company	no
24CA1396		Montana Highway Commission Repair Building	no
24CA1397		Kemhagan's Service, Inc.	no
24CA1501		Blue Ribbon Distributing Company	no
	RTI-10	General Distributing Warehouse	no
24CA1502		Martin Company	no
24CA1503		Ojala Oil Cmopany	no
24CA1504		Elk River Concrete	no
	RTI-11	Montana Electric Cooperatives Association	no
24CA1505		Milwaukee Road Bridge # NM-1138	yes

The four architectural properties found to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are in immediate proximity to one another, near the center of the West Bank study area. Together, these properties represent a strong cross-section of many of the West Banks twentieth century uses, and this study recommends the establishment of a small "West Bank Historic District" consisting of these sites. A draft National Register of Historic Places nomination form for such a district was prepared in conjunction with this project. In addition, this study recommends that the Milwaukee Road Bridge (site 24CA1505) also be listed on the National Register, when funding to prepare a nomination becomes available.

Summary descriptions of each of the 33 recorded properties are provided below. Additional information is contained on the completed site form for that property, on file at the Great Falls Historic Preservation Office.

1.	O'Reilly Automotive	RTI 01
2.	Walgreens Drug Store	RTI 02
3.	Fromicove Manufacturing and Distributing	RTI 03
4.	Union Oil Company Warehouse	24CA1381
5.	Johnson Distributing Company	24CA1382
6.	Cascade Veterinary Supply Company	RTI 04
7.	Goodell Veterinary Hospital	24CA1383
8.	Stockman Bank	RTI 05
9.	Stockman's Club	24CA1384
10.	Cascade County Solid Waste Department	RTI 06
11.	Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed	24CA1385
12.	Cascade County Disaster and Emergency Services	24CA1386
13.	Cascade County Public Works Warehouse	24CA1387
14.	Sunburst Oil Office	24CA1388
15.	Cowboys Bar and Museum	24CA1389
16.	William and Isabel Shea House	24CA1390
17.	Staybridge Suites Hotel	RTI 07
18.	James Talcott Construction	24CA1391
19.	Montana Steel Building Company	24CA1392
20.	Pat's Motel	24CA1393
21.	Coleman's Service and Repair	24CA1394
22.	Pizza Hut Delivery Building	RTI 08
23.	Missouri River Federal Courthouse	RTI 09
24.	Ferris-Killion Implement Company	24CA1395
25.	Montana Highway Commission Repair Building	24CA1396
26.	Kemhagan's Service, Inc.	24CA1397
27.	Blue Ribbon Distributing Company	24CA1501
28.	General Distributing Warehouse	RTI 10
29.	Martin Company	24CA1502
30.	Ojala Oil Company	24CA1503
31.	Elk River Concrete	24CA1504
32.	Montana Electric Cooperatives Association	RTI 11
33.	Milwaukee Road Bridge #NM-1138	24CA1505

Site RTI-01: O'Reilly Auto Parts Store

Description

The O'Reilly Auto Parts Store is piece of standardized chain-store architecture of the very recent modern era. The one-story block measures 70 feet wide (north-south) by 110 feet long (east-west). It rests on a concrete foundation and has a flat roof. The front (west) and two side elevations display a brick veneer at the water table, about 3 feet tall, and architectural stucco wall siding above. Corrugated metal siding covers the building's rear wall. The storefront is a large opening with a red architectural surround. It contains commercial-sash windows and doors.

History

O'Reilly Automotive, Inc. constructed this commercial block to house one of its retail auto parts stores in 2007. The firm currently operates stores at over 3,330 locations in 38 states.

Significance

Because of its recent construction and standardized design, this 2007 building has no potential for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 9. RTI-01: O'Reilly Auto Parts Store, front (west) and north elevations. View to east-southeast.

Site RTI-02: Walgreens Drug Store

Description

The Walgreens Drug Store building is piece of standardized chain-store architecture of the very recent modern era. It is a large, one story, brick block with a canted entry at the southwest corner. The building rests on a concrete foundation and has a flat roof. The canted entry has a tall brick parapet with concrete block coping and commercial-sash door and window fixtures shade by a large shed canopy made of ribbed metal. Window bays on the west and south elevations (either side of the entry feature) are denoted by surrounds and pilasters made of concrete block. Ribbed-metal shed canopies shade these side window bays as well. There is a two-lane "drive thru pharmacy" on the building's rear (north) elevation. It is sheltered by a ribbed-metal gabled canopy on metal posts.

History

In 2006, the Walgreen Company razed a Western Ranch Store and a Sun Rental building at this location to make room for construction of a new addition to its nationwide chain of drug stores. The Walgreens at this Great Falls location apparently was one among over 400 new stores the company opened for business in the following year. Typical of most other stores in the chain, it houses a pharmacy, drug store, general mechanize store and a photo shop.

Significance

Because of its recent construction and standardized design, this 2007 building has no potential for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 10. RTI-02: Walgreens Drug Store, north and east elevations. View to southwest.

Site RTI-03: Fromicove Manufacturing and Distributing

Description

Built in 1964, the Formicove Building is large industrial building of concrete-block masonry construction. Dimensions are 48 feet north-south by 148 feet east-west. The building features a barrel roof formed by steel arches. Roofing materials consists of newer ribbed metal sheeting. A tall flat parapet highlights the building's front (west) façade. The parapet appears to be an original element, but the façade was other remodeled in recent years. Modifications include architectural stucco wall siding, new storefront fixtures and a large shed-roofed awning made of metal. The awning covers a newer concrete deck with wrought-iron rails. The building's north and south side walls are each divided into several bays by concrete block pilasters. Most bays on the north have a single, metal-sash 1x1 sliding window.

The Formicove building has three modern additions. The first and largest of these was added toward the back (east) end of its south wall in 1996. Measuring 22 feet north-south by 60 feet east-west, it is a one-story shed roofed structure with a full basement. The front (west) façade has a flat parapet covered by stucco, a full-length shed-roofed porch made of lumber, and an aluminum-sash storefront windows and door. Other walls display vinyl siding. "Outlaws Hats," an embroidered hat and graphics enterprise, occupies this addition at present.

The two other additions include a 7-foot by 8-foot vestibule on the building's rear (east) elevation and a tall narrow gable-roofed garage toward the back of the north elevation. Constructed sometime between 2005 and 2007, the rear vestibule has a flat roof and vinyl wall siding. Of more recent construction, the garage has ribbed–metal siding and roof, a narrow garage opening on the north, and a person-sized door on the east. It provides access to the building's basement.

History

Following its completion in 1964, this building became the new home for the Formicove Manufacturing and Distribution Company's cabinetry plant. The company had been in business for about four years only at the time, operating at another location in Great Falls. Harry Priggs and Donald Stevenson reportedly owned the business originally.

Formicove built custom-order kitchen cabinets at this location from many years. One of the building's current owners, Kay Rogers, recalled her childhood experience of watching men unload Formicove's lumber supply brought directly to the plant by the railroad via the adjacent spur line . In 1969, Formicove, Inc. superceded Formicove Manufacturing and Distribution in business. Glenn W. Carpenter headed the new company. It may have been under Carpenter's direction that Formicove began selling and servicing home appliances as well. After Formicove ceased business in the early 1990s, the building became home to an embroidered hat and coat manufacturing business.

In 2002, Rogers Jewelers, Inc. purchased the building and extensively remodeled the interior for the manufacture and sale of high-quality jewelry. Montana's unique blue gemstone, the Yogo

Sapphire, became the company's specialty line. Owners of the company, Darryl and Kay Rogers, additionally refurbished some of the sewing equipment left behind by the previous owners and produced and sold embroidered hats and coats for awhile, and then just hats. Their son eventually took over that side of the operation. Rodgers Yogo Sapphires and Outlaw Hats remain in business here at present.

Significance

The Formicove Manufacturing and Distribution Building is one of several industrial facilities to appear in the west bank corridor of Great Falls during the post-World War II era. It lacks, however, the level of significance required for listing in the National Register under Criteria A, B or C. The cabinetry manufacturing and distribution plant which it first housed did not make a notable impact on the city's economic growth at the time, nor are either of the original owners known to have made a substantial contribution to social or civic affairs in Great Falls. Additionally, the building no longer serves of a representative example of post-World War II industrial architecture, having sustained numerous modifications to its exterior in recent years.



Figure 11. RTI-03: Fromicove Manufacturing and Distributing, front (west) and partial of south elevations. View to northeast.

Site 24CA1381: Union Oil Company Warehouse

Description

The Union Oil Company Warehouse is comprised of two distinct massings: a warehouse and retail office. The warehouse is the older of the two massings, reportedly constructed in 1950, while the retail office is a modern addition. Although not fully confirmed, the retail office may have been constructed and the warehouse remodeled to its current appearance in 1994.

The warehouse is a tall and long rectangular-shaped structure having a reported 1800 square feet of floor space. It has a gable roof, which is broken at the ridge so that the west slope is about three feet lower than the east slope. Exterior walls are resided with ribbed metal sheeting except the east (rear) wall. There, the original corrugated metals siding remain exposed. Three-foot foundation walls of concrete are evident on the rear elevation only. On the front elevation there is a tall freight entry with a modern metal garage door north of center, a smaller freight entry south of center and a metal person door toward the south end. A loading dock fronts the smaller freight entry. Several fuel storage tanks are located behind (east of) the warehouse.

The retail office is at the north end of the warehouse's front façade. It is a low, one-story structure, measuring about 30 feet square, with front gable roof and a concrete foundation. Exterior walls display a veneer of brick from the foundation to the window sills and ribbed metal sheeting above. Roofing consists of ribbed metal sheeting as well. Windows are 1x1 sliders with vinyl sashes. Metal-sash commercial doors are on the west and south elevations (one each).

History

The Union Oil Company of California purchased the 1.15 acres at this site in May 1948, and apparently constructed the warehouse by or in 1950. At the time, the company was one of the largest producers and marketers of oil in North America. It presumably used the warehouse for storing propane products shipped to Great Falls by rail. While unverified, the company may have maintained a retail outlet for its propane products directly across the street from the warehouse at 1200 3rd St. NW.

In late spring 1951, Union Oil sold the property to Fred and Bessie Jones. For the next two years, Fred Jones apparently operated the propane outlet under the guise of the Union Natural Gas Company. Then in August 1953, the Jones' sold the property to Union Propane Company, a new Montana corporation presumably formed by Fred Jones and others. Mr. Jones was Union Propane's president. The company went out of business in the late 1950s.

City directories revealed that Petrolane Steel Glass, Inc. was at this location by 1961. The company remained in business here for over 25 years. Its later listings in the city directories advertised "LP [liquid propane] gas service, home, farm, industry, bottle and recreational vehicles filled, home tanks filled." The facility continues to see use as a propane outlet at present.

Significance

The Union Oil Company Warehouse is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. None of the various propane business associated with the warehouse during the historic era played an important role in the city's economic growth and development. At the same time, the warehouse has no known ties with an individual or individuals that made a substantial contribution to social or civic affairs in Great Falls (Criteria A and B). More importantly, however, the warehouse can not be considered National-Register eligible due to a lack of integrity.



Figure 12. 24CA1381: Union Oil Company Warehouse, front (west) and south elevations. View to north-northwest.

Site 24CA1382: Johnson Distributing Company

Description

Johnson Distributing currently consists of a complex of six buildings located on two adjoining tracts of land. The southernmost of these two tracts historically was associated with a construction business. Johnson Distributing did not acquire that tract until sometime between 1973 and 1989.

Feature 1 is a 40 by 60-foot Quonset hut located at the far south end of the property, or on the southern tract. Erected in around 1946 or 1947, it was an early component of the construction business that originally occupied this site. This self-supporting steel arch structure still displays original metal sheeting on the barrel arch at the gable end walls. Entries are found on the east end wall only. They include a tall opening with a metal-clad replacement garage door. Windows are metal-sash awning-fixed combinations. The east and west ends have a single window each, and a paired window and six windows in single settings are on the south side of the arch barrel. The north side of the arch barrel is without windows.

Feature 2 is a repair garage located just a few feet east of the Feature 1 Quonset. It consists of two distinct massings: a repair garage or shop to the east and a storage shed to the west. Montana Department of Revenue records provided a single construction date of 1950 for this building.

The shop is a tall gable-roofed structure measuring 30 feet east-west by 34 feet north-south. It is of concrete block masonry construction and rests on a concrete foundation. A very tall garage opening occupies the north elevation. It has an I-beam lintel and holds pair of metal-clad doors. Four metal-sash combination windows are on the south elevation. Roofing is corrugated metal.

The building's storage shed portion is lower and much longer than the shop, measuring 60 feet east-west by 30 feet north-south. It has wood-framed walls sheathed on the exterior with corrugated metal sheeting, a gable roof covered by corrugated metal sheeting, and a concrete foundation. Two freight openings are on the north elevation, each of which holds a pair of metal-clad folding doors. In common with the garage, the storage shed is illuminated by four metal-sash combination windows on its south elevation.

Feature 3 is large retail office and showroom located along 3rd Street just north of Feature 1. In common with the Quonset hut, it stands on the property's southern tract. However, it was constructed by Johnson Distributing in 1989, after the company added the southern tract to its holdings.

The retail office and showroom is a wood- or metal-frame building measuring 72 feet north-south by 140 feet east-west. The foundation is concrete, ribbed metal siding covers the exterior walls and the roof is a low side gable, also sheathed by ribbed metal siding. Retail offices occupy the building's front (west) 30 feet, and the front (west) façade is denoted by a ribbed-metal parapet wall rising about 3 feet above the roofline. An entry flanked by metal-sash 1x1 sliding windows (3 to each side) is located toward the façade's north end. The south elevation

has a large freight entry with a metal-clad roll-up garage door and a metal person door. Another metal person door is on the east elevation.

Feature 4 is a large, tall storage shed (40-feet square) just north of Feature 3. Montana Department of Revenue records indicated that it was constructed in 1985 but at another location. Johnson Distributing moved the building to its current site on the property's northern tract by 2002. The foundation is concrete, the construction system has either wood- or metal framing, and the roof consists of a low gable. Ribbed metal sheeting covers the exterior walls and the roof. The south elevation has a large freight entry with a metal-clad roll-up garage door and a metal person door. No other entries and no windows are present.

Feature 5 also stands along 3rd Street just north of Feature 4. It currently consists of a large five-bay shop (40 feet north-south by 100 feet east-west) and a warehouse (60 feet by 62 feet) at the west end of the shop's north elevation. Reported constructed in 1951, the western three bays of the shop and the first or southern 22 feet of the warehouse are the buildings' original as well as part of the original core of Johnson Distributing. The company added the shop's eastern two-bays in 1983, and the warehouse's northern 24 feet around 2003.

The shop is a tall, side gable-roofed structure resting on a concrete foundation. The roof and exterior walls sport a recent veneer of ribbed-metal siding. The shop's five bays are denoted on the south elevation by large garage door openings (one each bay). There is a metal-clad roll-up garage door at each bay. Three window openings and a door on the shop's south elevation have been covered with ribbed metal siding.

The warehouse is a shed-roofed structure resting on a concrete foundation. Its northern addition reportedly is of pole construction. The roof and exterior walls have a recent veneer of ribbed metal siding. There is a freight entry on the west elevation of the warehouse's southern or original portion; its holds a pair of sliding doors suspended from an overhead runner. The addition's north elevation has a freight entry with a metal-clad roll-up garage door.

Feature 6 is a 20-foot by 60-foot Butler building, probably manufactured in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Montana Department of Revenue records indicated that it originally was part of the construction company complex at the south end of today's site where Feature 1 and 2 stand. In 2002, Johnson Distributing moved it to its current location at the site's northeast corner, next to the railroad spur.

This Butler building is a metal building with a low gable roof. It rests on a new concrete foundation. The roof and the exterior walls still display original ribbed metal siding. A large opening on the south elevation is covered by a pair of metal sliding doors suspended from an overhead runner. A "Butler" tag is above the door. Windows are metal-sash fixed units with 2x3 lights. There are two windows on the north elevation and four on the east elevation.

History

A partnership by the name of Roberson & Cave probably began to develop facilities for a construction business on the southern tract of today's site not to long after acquiring the property

in March 1947. Within the next three months, the partnership presumably broke up and the newly-organized Cave Construction, Inc. took over. While unverified, Cave Construction may have represented the interests of James D. Cave. The company remained in business until James Cave's death in the early 1970s. It filed its last annual report to the State of Montana in 1972, and in the following year ownership of the property distributed by deeds among Cave's heirs, Josephine F. Cave, the administer of his estate, James A. Cave, Thomas P. Cave and Delores Cave Peterson.

Johnson Distributing Company reportedly started business in 1950. Two years passed, however, before the owner of the company, Erwin H. and Mildred Johnson acquired land at what is now the northern tract of this site. At the time, Johnson Distributing was a wholesale distributor of "truck equipment." Erwin Johnson was the manager and president of the company, while Mildred held the office of vice president.

By the early 1960s, the Johnsons had expanded the business to include the sale and distribution of auto parts. Additionally, they opened a real estate company directly across the 3rd Street. A few years later, in 1967, they sold the property at Johnson Distributing to Clarence M. Henderson. While Henderson became general manager of the company at that time, Erwin and Mildred Johnson seemingly remained on board as officials. By1973, the Johnsons had retired and Henderson was operating the company as a wholesaler of trucking equipment only again.

In the late 1970s or early 1980, Michael Henderson took over Johnson Distributing and he continues to head the business today. The company currently is a leading supplier of golf carts in Montana. It also handles a variety of utility vehicles, lawn mowers, tractors and other related equipment.

Significance

The early, post-World War II buildings at this site are representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Johnson Distributing site retains a heavy commercial use today, and includes two buildings that date from the late 1940s – including a characteristic, manufactured, Quonset-type building. As described below, however, the integrity of the site has been greatly diminished by the addition of large modern buildings to the property, the relocation of others, and the construction of significant building additions. The loss of integrity caused by these changes renders the site ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 13. 24CA1382: Johnson Distributing Company, Quonset Hut (Feature 1), east and north elevations. View to south-southwest.

Site RTI-04: Cascade Veterinary Supply

Description

The Cascade Veterinary Supply Co. Building (Feature 1) is a large Butler building erected to accommodate a store, office and warehouse in 1962. Its west elevation, facing the street, was the original storefront but the customer entry is now on the north elevation. The building has two rear (east) additions, both warehouses; the first constructed in 1978-1979 and the second in 2003.

The steel-framed building has a concrete foundation and a near-flat front gable roof. Dimensions are 33 feet north-south by 60 feet east-west. Original ribbed metal siding remains exposed on the south elevation. In 2007, the west and north elevations were remodeled to their current appearance, that of a standardized Cellar-One outlet. Modifications included relocation of the customer entry from the west elevation to the far west end of the north elevation, installation of a new aluminum-sash door and aluminum-sash storefront windows and the addition of architectural stucco wall siding. Slightly projecting boxed cornices made of architectural stucco were added to roofline at the north and west elevations as well.

Both warehouse additions are of steel-frame construction and have concrete foundations and ribbed-metal siding. The 1978-79 warehouse measures 30 feet north-south by 40 feet east-west. It has a flat roof. The rear or east wall is no longer visible, having been completely obscured by

the 2003 warehouse. A metal person door on the north elevation is the only entry. The 2003 warehouse is a taller structure with a larger footprint, measuring 60 feet square. It has a very low-pitched gable roof, and two metal roll-up garage doors and a metal person door, all on the north elevation.

Feature 2 is a prefabricated steel-framed structure located at the northeast corner of the property near the railroad tracks. While unverified, it could have been constructed around the same time as the 1962 veterinary supply building, if not earlier. Current owners use it for storage.

The structure has the appearance of a quonset hut but with a three-quarters barrel arch instead of a full arch. The arch is cut short on the west elevation. The structure's concrete foundation is a few inches taller on the west, and about 3 feet tall walls on the north, east and south. Corrugated metal covers the barrel arch and walls. Access is provided on the west elevation by a pair of large sliding doors suspended from a metal runner. Next to the structure's north wall is a wooden pen filled with gravel.

History

Veterinarian Dr. Harry C. Goodell, Jr. had the Cascade Veterinary Supply Co. Building constructed in 1962. Great Falls builders, Burt and James Talcott, completed the project. At the time, the property was part of a tract that Dr. Goodell had purchased and established a veterinary hospital on in the mid-1950s. The Goodell Veterinary Hospital (see 24CA1383, 803 3rd St. NW) stood on the southern portion of the tract, while the new veterinary supply building was 20 feet north of the hospital. In addition to the Cascade Veterinary Supply Company, Goodell operated another business at this location, the Great Falls Pet Supply Company. A store and office occupied the front (west) 20 feet of the building, while the remaining or back (east) 40 feet was devoted to warehouse space.

By November 1978, the veterinary supply and pet supply companies were no longer in business and an auto body shop occupied the building. That month Dr. Goodell, still the property owner, received a city permit to construct a 30-foot by 40-foot addition on the back of the shop. According to plans prepared by Goodell's construction contractor, Talcott Building, the new addition was to be a "Butler Building (same as original)." The auto body shop vacated the building only a year or two later.

In 1982, a new business moved in, the Northern Rock Welding Supply Company. Although not verified, the company probably had purchased the property on which the building stood by the as well. The House of Glass was the next known owner/occupant. It remodeled the storefront in 1991, and erected the second warehouse addition in 2003. Four years later, the property was acquired by the current owner/occupant, Cellular One.

Significance

The Cascade Veterinary Supply Co. Building is one of several industrial facilities to appear in the west bank corridor of Great Falls during the post-World War II era. It lacks, however, the level of significance required for listing in the National Register under Criteria A, B or C. The veterinary and pet supply companies which it first housed did not make a notable impact on the city's economic growth at the time, nor was the original owner known to have made a substantial contribution to social or civic affairs in Great Falls. Additionally, the building no longer serves of a representative example of post-World War II industrial architecture, having sustained numerous modifications in recent years.



Figure 14. RTI-04: Cascade Veterinary Supply (Feature 1), front (west) elevation. View to east.

Site 24CA1383: Goodell Veterinary Hospital

Description

Built in the mid-1950s, the Goodell Veterinary Hospital (Feature 1) is single story building of cinder block construction. There are two major additions: an office (with a storage room) added on the north side of the hospital in 1961 and a kennel constructed on the hospital's south side in 1965. These two additions are of cinder block construction as well. Roofs are flat and have wide overhangs underscored by exposed rafter tips.

The mid-1950s hospital is notably larger than its additions, measuring 35 feet wide (north-south) by 48 feet long (east-west). A brick flower box on the front (west) façade marks the division between it and the 1961 office (north) addition. The hospital façade has an entry flanked by two windows to the south. The entry has a vinyl replacement door, while the windows are original, metal sash fixed-over-hopper units. Openings at these windows have concrete block sills. A rear entry on the east elevation retains its original half-light wood door.

Dimensions of the 1961 office or northern addition are 20 feet by 36 feet. The addition is denoted on the building's front façade by a recessed entry between windows (one to each side). The entry retains its original wood door. The window on its south side is similar in size and design to the combination metal-sash windows at the mid-1950s hospital; it has concrete-block sill as well. The window opening north of the entry is somewhat smaller and lacks a sill; its holds a replacement window, an aluminum-sash sliding unit. There are two windows on the office's north elevation, an aluminum-sash sliding replacement window towards the front and a glass block window towards the back.

The kennel or southern addition is just 12 feet wide by 31 feet long. Only the front portion of the kennel is building space, while the rear portion accommodates a dog run. Walls of the dog run are a few feet shorter. The building permit for the kennel indicated the dog run was to be constructed without a roof. There is, however, a low shed roof over the structure at present. The kennel addition is denoted on the building's front façade by a large glass block window only.

A third and much more recent addition is a carport, located at the rear of the office addition. A wood-frame structure, the carport has corrugated plastic on the roof and the two side walls. The east wall is open.

The Feature 2 mobile home is a single-wide trailer established on the property in 1985. It has a gable roof, T-1-111 siding, metal-sash sliding windows, and metals doors on the two side elevations (one each).

History

By September 1954, a young Great Falls veterinarian, Dr. Harry C. Goodell, had decided to leave his position with the Cascade Animal Clinic and start his own practice. At that time, he purchased this property (then a 70- by 150-foot tract) along 3rd St. NW for his new animal hospital. Sletten Construction Company was retained to erect the proposed concrete block

building. Construction likely started in earnest after Goodell received a $10,000 mortgage on the property later in the year. The new "Goodell Veterinary Hospital" probably accepted its first patients in 1955.

The hospital apparently prospered, or enough so for Goodell to expand the facility as well as open another business on the property in the 1960s. First in 1961, he had builder Jack Lins construct an office addition on the north side of the hospital. That project was followed in 1962 by the erection of large warehouse to accommodate a veterinary supply outlet and a pet supply outlet both. The warehouse stood on Goodell's property 20 feet north of the hospital (803 3rd St. NW). Finally, in 1965, the hospital was enlarged again, this time with a kennel addition on its south side. Builder Mike Torick completed that project.

Goodell continued to run the hospital until about 1982 when he presumably retired. Research materials consulted by this project did not uncover much additional information about Goodell, other than he and his wife Noella had been married for at least 30 years by the early 1980s, during which time they resided on 6th Street.

By 1983, a husband and wife team of veterinarians, Dr. Russell Hill and Dr. Beth Hill had purchased the hospital and renamed it the Westside Animal Clinic. Two years after that, the Hills established the Feature 2 mobile home behind the hospital and made it their home. The Hills still run the clinic and live in the mobile home today (2009).

Significance

The Goodell Veterinary Hospital dates to the post-World War II construction boom in Great Falls and the city's west bank corridor. It lacks, however, the level of significance required for listing in the National Register under Criteria A, B or C. The appearance of the veterinary hospital in the corridor did not make a notable impact on the city's economic growth, nor did it provide services not already commonly available in Great Falls at the time. Additionally, the original owner, Dr. Goodell, is not known to have made a substantial contribution to social or civic affairs in Great Falls. The building, likewise, is not a particularly good representative example of post-World War II industrial architecture, not possessing any distinctive stylistic elements or qualities of design. Finally, two additions to the building are each less than 50 years old.

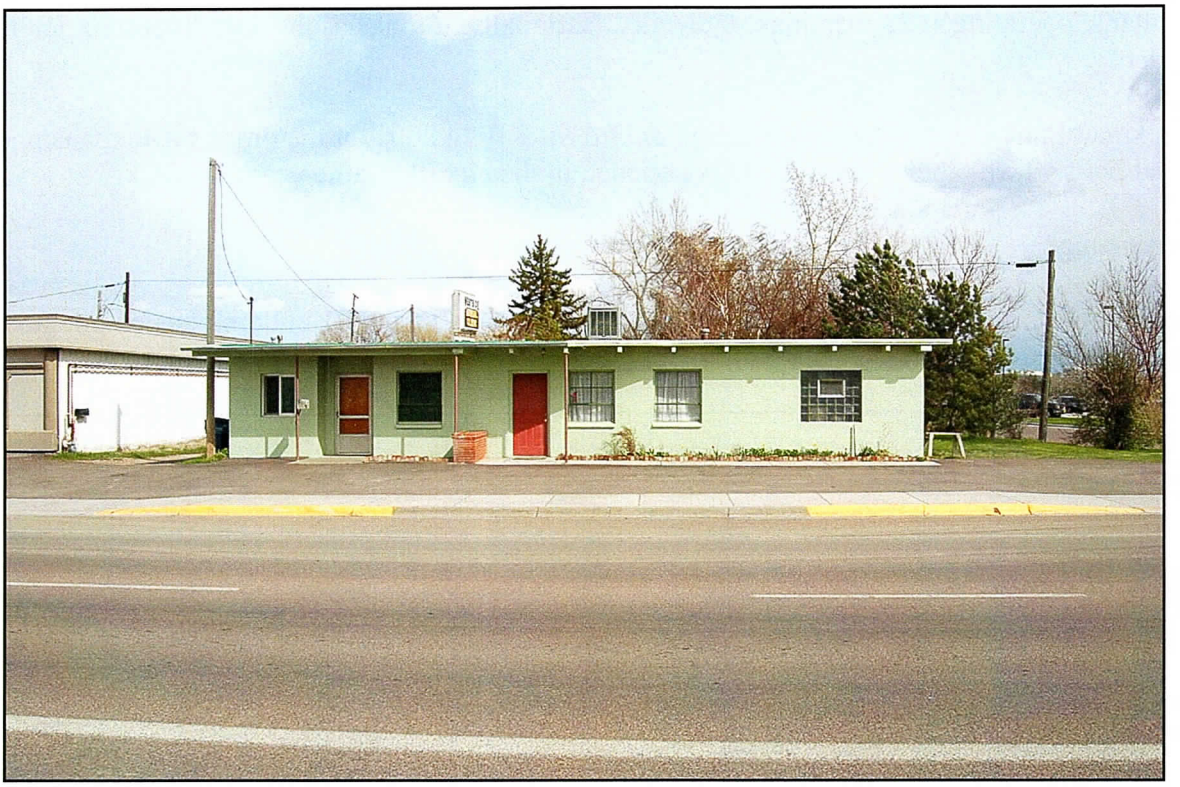


Figure 15. 24CA1383: Goodell Veterinary Hospital (Feature 1), front (west) façade. View to east.

Site RTI-05: Stockman Bank

Description

The Stockman Bank building is piece of standardized chain architecture of the very recent modern era. It is a large two-story brick building which is orientated on a southwest-northeast axis, setback significantly from the street and surrounded by parking lots and lanes for its drive thru banking facilities. A curved, two-story entry feature occupies the west corner. It is filled by metal-sash windows and has a small brick vestibule. There is a one-story wing on the bank's northeast elevation, two one-story wings on the rear (southeast) elevation, and a drive thru canopy on the southwest elevation. The building rests on a concrete foundation faced with granite ashlar, and has flat roofs. Visual relief is provided by roof cornices made of architectural stucco, a belt course of specialty brick, and other brick details.

History

The Stockman Bank of Montana traces its history to 1953, when William Nefsy purchased controlling interest in the Miles City Bank. Nefsy reorganized the bank, creating an organization geared toward serving the needs of local farmer, ranchers and businesspeople. Beginning in the early 1980s, Stockman Bank started acquiring banks and/or opening new branches in other Montana communities. The company currently is the fourth largest banking organization in

Montana, operating at 22 locations statewide. Nationally, it ranks as the 17th largest agricultural lender.

Stockman Bank constructed this building on 3rd St. NW in 2001, at the time of its expansion into Great Falls. Two other Stockman Banks opened in the city that same year.

Significance

Because of its recent construction and standardized design, this 2001 building has no potential for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 16. RTI-05: Stockman Bank, View to northeast.

Site 24CA1384: Stockman's Club

Description

The Stockman's Club is a large single-story building, constructed as a bar and restaurant in 1944-45. The original core is made of uniformly shaped round logs, indicative of the Rustic Style of architecture. It has a simple rectangular-shaped footprint, measuring 108 feet long (north-south) by 55 feet wide, but is somewhat complex in overall massing. As built, it consisted of a long side gable log pen at center with shorter but slightly wider front gable log pens on the north and south sides (one each). An open shed-roofed porch occupied the inset on the center pen's front façade, while an enclosed shed roofed wing was at the inset on the rear (east) elevation.

The Stockman's Club displays numerous alterations from more than one remodeling episode. The front and rear elevations of the north pen have an early residing of vertical boards on the walls and diagonal broads at the gable ends. The front porch may have been enclosed and a small 5 by 5 foot vestibule constructed on the rear elevation of the south pen early on as well. The south end of the building underwent a more extensive level of remodeling in 1999, presumably when this portion of the club was converted into a casino. Associated changes include a large 21 by 30 foot addition on the front of the south pen, a front vestibule on the north wall of that addition and a side vestibule on the south pen's south wall. The front vestibule is surmounted by a tall open "watch tower" with a shed roof. Wall coverings at the south pen and its additions as well as the building's former front porch probably also date to 1999. They consist of an approximately 3-foot-tall brick veneer at the base and horizontal steel siding above. The building has no historic doors, and the windows have been boarded shut or are modern replacements.

Original log walls remain exposed on the building's north and east elevations only. Wall logs are joined at the ends in round corner notches. Tips of the logs extend about 1½ feet beyond the corners and have a sharp V-cut. The only other notable original feature left is a tall stone masonry chimney on the south wall of the south pen. It is constructed of small boulders and cobbles.

History

Construction of the Stockman's Club likely commenced soon after L. P. DePratu acquired a deed to the property from Cascade County in October 1944. That same month, presumably DePratu and others filed articles of incorporation for "The Stockman's Club," a Great Falls-based nonprofit corporation which was proposed for "social" activities. At the time of its completion, the new Stockman's Club bar and restaurant stood as a slightly larger version of an earlier log social club just one block south on 3rd St. NW, the Cowboys Bar and Museum (24CA1389, 619 3rd St. NW). The Stockman's Club was still active in the spring of 1947 when "Patty" DePratu hired the Great Falls Roofing Company to constructed a small "lean to" addition (no longer extant) on the back of the building. Within the next year or two, however, L.P. DePratu apparently lost title to the property and shut down the club.

In late 1949, Thomas Grassecshi acquired ownership control of the Stockman's Club. It is unknown if the club reopened immediately or remained closed until 1955. That year, the Great Falls' City Directory listed a business at this location for the first time. Rather than a social club, it was a commercial bar and restaurant, known as the "J Bar T Ranch House." Joseph Kralick and Thomas Tomick operated the J Bar T together into the late 1950s. During that time, Kralick paid off a $75,000 contract for deed on the property, and became the sole property owner.

Around 1964, William and Shirley McClanahan rented the building form Kratlick and opened a nightclub there, which they called the "J-T Ranchhouse." After Kralick's death about six years later, his son, Joseph A. Kralick, Jr. took over the J-T Ranchhouse. He and a partner, Richard K Johnson, operated the nightclub for many years to come.

Significance

The Stockman's Club was the second of two social clubs catering to area stockmen to appear in the West Bank corridor in the early to mid- 1940s. It lacks the level of significance and integrity, however, required for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In regards to is historical significance, the Stockman's Club ultimately did not achieve the social status and longevity of its earlier counterpart, the Cowboys Bar and Museum (24CA1389, 311 3rd St NW), its operation did not have an important impact on the local economy, nor were the founders of The Stockman's Club known to have made a substantial contribution to social or civic affairs in Great Falls. Additionally, the building no longer serves of a representative example of the Rustic Style, having sustained numerous modifications to its exterior over the years.



Figure 17. 24CA1384: Stockman's Club, front (west) facade and north elevation. View to southeast.

Site RTI-06: Cascade County Solid Waste Department

Description

This site consists of two vernacular industrial buildings, both dating from the 1980s, which together served as a maintenance facility for Cascade County's solid waste disposal program.

Feature 1 is a steel-framed shop building measuring 60 feet square; according to building permit records, it was apparently erected in 1985 by a company named "All Steel Buildings." The building is steel framed, and likely prefabricated. It rests on a concrete pad foundation. All wall faces and the shallow-pitch roof are clad with corrugated metal. The primary elevation faces north, and is defined by three large metal overhead garage doors, evenly-spaced. The only other fenestration is on the east elevation, which contains a metal man door and three two-light, metal-sash windows.

Feature 2 is a large, wood-framed equipment shed, also likely dating from the 1980s. It rests on a concrete pad, has walls clad with corrugated metal, and has a wood-framed gable roof surfaced with asphalt shingles. The main elevation faces east. Approximately the southern two-thirds of this elevation is open, allowing access to the equipment storage area inside. A paneled wood, half-light door is to the north of that opening, accessing an enclosed room. The only other wall opening is for a single-light window on the west elevation.

History

These two buildings stand on a small parcel of land at the far northwest corner of the former Cascade County shop complex, on the west side of 3rd Street Northwest. County plat maps dated as early as 1940 show this parcel as being reserved for the county solid waste program, though early maps do not reveal the existence of any buildings at the site.

The larger of the two buildings at this site, a combination garage/repair shop building, was apparently erected in the late summer or autumn of 1985. The building permit application for the structure lists a company named "All Steel Buildings" as the contractor. Listed cost of the structure was $53,653.60. No construction records were located for the smaller garage at the site, but its visual appearance suggests that it was constructed at about the same time. The buildings apparently continued to serve the county's solid waste program until its operations were privatized in the early 21st century.

Significance

Neither building at this site displays noteworthy historic or architectural merit, nor are less than 50 years old. Consequently, the site does not meet the criteria for National Register eligibility.



Figure 18. RTI-06: Cascade County Solid Waste Department, shop building (feature 1), east elevation. View to northwest.

Site 24CA1385: Montana Vegetable Oil & Feed

Description

The Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed Plant includes 13 features, including the processing plant, warehouses, groups of seed bins and oil storage tanks, among other facilities. More than half of those were constructed within the last 20 to 30 years. Historic-age buildings and structures are concentrated within the south half of the site.

Feature 1 is an office building constructed toward the north end of the site in 1976. It is a flat-roofed framed building sheathed by ribbed metal siding. A scale house for weighing trucks loaded with seeds is on building's west side.

Feature 2 is a group of five massive seed storage bins aligned in a row between the Feature 1 office building to the west and the railroad tracks to the east. Erected around 1985, the bins are each round Butler structures made of corrugated metal. Each stands on a round concrete foundation. The two southernmost bins are taller but narrower than the three northernmost ones. A steel feed tower stands between the southern two bins. It lefts seeds up from a feed site near the scale house (Feature 1) to a system of overhead conveyor belts. This system distributes the

seeds into the bins. It also sees use in conveying stored seeds from the bins to the processing plant and/or other facilities at the site.

Feature 3 is a group of six seed hopper bins aligned in two rows just south of Feature 2 seed storage bins. Erected in the early 1980s, they are identical in size and construction to each other. The hopper bins are round Butler structures, but somewhat smaller in size than the Feature 2 storage bin. Additionally, they each taper into a funnel-like form at the base. These six hopper bins rest on a common concrete pad foundation.

Feature 4 is a large warehouse at the north end of the site. It is a modern addition to the plant, erected in 1987. The framed building rests on a concrete foundation, has a low gable roof and is sided on the exterior with ribbed metal sheeting. A large metal-clad garage door and a metal person door are found on the north elevation.

Feature 5 is a large quonset building located in the south central portion of the site. It dates to the plant's original development in 1946-47. The 1950 and 1957 Sanborn maps indicate it was used for seed storage.

The Feature 5 quonset has a full barrel arch roof, corrugated metal siding, and a concrete foundation. A garage-sized opening on the west end wall has been boarded. There is a small wooden shed addition on the east end wall. A branch of the plant's conveyor belt system runs above and down the center of the building. It links to a group of five hopper bins (Feature 7) on the north the quonset. The south half of the quonset is partially covered by the Feature 6 warehouse.

Feature 6 is large warehouse on the north side of the Feature 5 quonset. It appears to have been constructed in the 1960s, replacing the plant's original "bag and oil" warehouse that had stood at this same location.

Feature 6 is a large and tall gable-roofed building of frame construction. A shed roofed wing on its north side extends over the south half of the Feature 5 quonset. Exterior walls have corrugated metal siding. A pair of sliding garage doors is on the west elevation. They are made of ribbed metal and hang from an overhead runner. The gable end wall above these doors holds a pair of aluminum-sash picture windows, both with side lights.

Feature 7 is a group of five seed hopper bins located in a row along the north wall of the Feature 5 quonset. Reportedly constructed in 1978, they are similar in design and size to the Feature 5 hoppers.

Feature 8 is the seed oil processing plant, a clay tile masonry building located at the south end of the site. It was significantly larger at the time of its completion in 1946-47. A mill for crushing seed and grains that originally comprised about the eastern third of the plant likely was removed many years ago. Much more recently, in spring 2009 the western half about of the remaining building was severely damaged by fire and torn down. Workers erected a new west wall and completely rebuilt the building's roof. The new wall and roof are both covered by ribbed metal sheeting. Original window openings are boarded.

Feature 9 is a small clay tile masonry building a few feet north of the Feature 8 processing plant. Available information indicates that a road construction firm may have constructed it between 1936 and 1940, or at least a few years prior to development of the oil and feed plant. The 1950 and 1957 Sanborn maps indicated that the building may have been a small electric power generating plant. The building has a low shed roof, a replacement garage door on the west elevation.

Feature 10 is a pair of round metal seed bins and a feeding tower located on the west elevation of the Feature 6 bag and oil warehouse. They appear older, and may date to the plant's original development in 1946-47.

Feature 11 is a group of 11 welded tanks located between the Feature 6 bag and oil warehouse and the Feature 8 processing plant. They contain processed oil. A few of the tanks are original to the plant, while the others were all likely added between the early 1960s and early 1970s.

Feature 12 is a modern prefabricated shed north of the Feature 8 processing plant.

Feature 13 is a group of three modern hopper send bins on the south side of the Feature 8 processing plant.

History

The Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed Plant was the second of two major industrial facilities at this property. The Sunburst Oil Refinery was the first, operating at this location from 1923 to 1933. Some storage tanks and a warehouse only were here, however, with the bulk of the refinery's others facilities situated to the west at the later site of today's Cascade County Shops. Within just a few years after the refinery shut down little remained of it except for a few ancillary structures.

Development of the oil and feed plant likely was already underway at the time that the newly-organized Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed Company purchased the property in the fall of 1946. While unverified, the plant appears to have been primarily intended for crushing and cold-processing flax seeds into linseed oil. Edible cooked oils and powders likely also produced.

Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed operated the plant until 1974. The Coastal Trading Company subsequently owned and operated the plant. In 1983, it sold the plant to the Continental Grain Company for $5.85 million. Continental Grain started the processing organic flax and canola at the plant. Current owner, Montana Specialty Mills, LLC acquired the plant in the late 1990s.

Significance

The Montana Vegetable Oil and Feed Plant is one of several industrial facilities to appear in the west bank corridor of Great Falls during the post-World War II era. Most of the current plant facilities are modern, however, and it lacks the integrity required for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 19. 24CA1385: Montana Vegetable Oil & Feed, Office and Scale House (Feature 1). View to northeast.

Site 24CA1386: Cascade County Disaster and Emergency Services

Description

This site consists of two buildings: an office facility (Feature 1) and a shop building (Feature 2).

Feature 1 is a single-story office building, irregular in plan, constructed in 1973 and subsequently enlarged to the south. The building is minimally detailed, but the primary (west) façade features Modern design elements reflective of the era in which it was built. The original and largest portion of the building is a rectangular mass (50 by 32 feet) on an approximate northeast-southwest axis. It is wood-framed with a concrete foundation, T1-11 plywood exterior siding, and a shallow-pitch gable roof with deep, enclosed eaves. The roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. Wood-framed casement windows are used throughout, and continuous banks of those windows help define the front elevation. Doors are metal. There is an entry vestibule to the south of the primary mass and a small gabled wing to the north, both of which likely date from the building's original construction. A newer building wing exists to the south of the entry vestibule, placed on a north-south axis at an angle to the rest of the building; it was constructed in 1993. While smaller than the original building mass, it is similar in overall appearance and utilizes similar materials and construction methods.

Feature 2 is a vernacular industrial building that houses a carpentry and paint shop. While its year of construction is not documented, the oldest portions of the building may date from circa 1940. The building displays three distinct structural masses, suggesting that it may not have been built as a single unit. The largest mass is the carpentry shop, at the west end of the building, with a gable-roofed north-south mass approximately 60 feet long and 30 feet wide. A smaller mass with an east-west gable is to the east of the carpentry shop, and is used for storage. The paint shop is the easternmost mass; it is of similar size to the storage area, but has a north-south gable.

Most or all of the building is wood-framed, and atop a concrete foundation. Roof surfaces are covered with asphalt shingles. All of the building's exterior walls have been resided with modern corrugated metal. The fenestration pattern appears to be largely historic, although some modern elements have been introduced. Historic person doors are paneled wood with half-light glazing, arranged in pairs; modern metal doors are also present. Non-historic paneled wood overhead garage doors are present. Windows are a mix of historic and modern casement units.

History

This site occupies a portion of a large tract of land that, until recently, served as the primary shop facility for Cascade County. Active since the late 1930s, the facility was primarily used by the county's road and bridge departments, but was also utilized by other county agencies. This site, the only portion of the facility still in active use in 2009, includes a small office building and a larger structure that serves as a county paint and carpentry shop.

The Cascade County shop facility occupied a large, polygonal tract of land east of 3rd Street NW and west of the Great Northern Railway's Black Eagle spur line. The tract, almost a quarter-mile long and over 300 feet wide, was acquired incrementally by the county, with the first purchase occurring in 1926. The county obtained the bulk of the land, however, through a 1936 tax sale of the real estate formerly owned by the Sunburst Refining Company. Sunburst had developed an oil refinery in the West Bank area in the late 1920s, but ended operations in 1933.

Significant building construction at the county shop complex was underway by the late 1930s. The primary shop building, designed in 1938 and likely erected soon thereafter, was a large concrete structure with Art Deco detailing, located near the southeastern corner of the tract. To the west, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) constructed a similarly-sized brick building in 1939; this served as a warehouse and staging facility for various WPA construction projects in the region, and was transferred to the county after the close of the WPA program. Smaller, wood-framed structures erected during the first years included a blacksmith shop and a carpentry/paint building (Feature 2 at this site). Fueling facilities were also present, and much of the property was used as an open-air equipment yard.

The tract included only shop-related facilities until 1973, when a small office building (Feature 1) was constructed along 3rd Street NW. First constructed to house a County Surveyor's office, the building became home for the Cascade County Planning Office and the county's office of Disaster and Emergency Services.

The tract continued to serve as the Cascade County shop until 2008, when a new, $6.4 million shop complex was completed at a site near Interstate 15, 7 miles west of Great Falls. The large 1938 shop building was razed soon thereafter, and most of the old site was vacated. The two buildings that comprise this site, however, remain in use in 2009.

Significance

This site contains two buildings that were once a part of the Cascade County shop facility. As such, the site is representative of the long tradition of industrial use that once characterized much of the West Bank area. As a whole, however, the site no longer conveys that tradition of use. The Feature 1 building is well under 50 years old, and includes a prominently-placed recent addition. The Feature 2 building has been completely resided with modern materials, and displays an altered fenestration pattern. For these reasons, the site does not retain the level of integrity necessary to be considered for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 20. 24CA1386: Cascade County Disaster and Emergency Services, Office building (feature 1), west elevation. View to east.

Site 24CA1387: Cascade County Public Works Warehouse

Description

This site consists of two buildings: a shop building (Feature 1), and a blacksmith shop building (Feature 2).

Feature 1 is a large rectangular building constructed on a north-south axis, approximately 141 feet long and 78 feet wide. The building rests on a concrete foundation. Exterior walls are bearing brick, laid in a common bond. The building has a barrel roof, supported by a series of nine steel trusses, running east-west. Shallow buttresses in the east and west walls help support the trusses, and articulate those walls into eight regularly-spaced bays.

The north and south elevations display much of the building's limited architectural detail. These elevations were historically identical, and feature round-top parapet walls. A garage door opening is centered on each elevation; two shallow, decorative buttresses exist on each side of the garage opening, and extend upward to partially bracket a bank of three windows above the door. Additional detail is provided by the concrete caps atop these buttresses, and by two bands of projecting brick above the door level. Person doors exist both east and west of each garage door. The garage doors are modern overhead metal units; person doors are metal, and may or may not be historic.

Banks of windows exist in each of the bays on both the east and west elevations. All are historic, metal-framed units. A typical configuration is a bank of 12 lights (4 rows of 3), with the two center rows comprising a hinged unit. These banks exist individually in some bays, and in groups of four in others. The windows over the garage doors were 9-light units; those on the north elevation survive, but those on the south have been infilled.

Feature 2 is a blacksmith shop building; it is historic, but of unknown age. It clearly predates the shop building, and appears to be a surviving feature from the Sunburst Oil Refinery complex that earlier occupied this site; consequently, it may have been built as early as 1923. The building is approximately square, and consists of three separate structural masses. The approximate southern third of the building has brick walls and an east west gable roof. To the north of the brick mass are two similarly-sized north-south masses joined side-by-side, each with a north-south gable roof. This gives the full roofline an "M" profile when viewed from the north. The northerly masses are wood-framed, and have pressed metal exterior cladding scored to simulate brickwork. All of the building masses are above a concrete foundation, and all roof surfaces are covered with rolled asphalt.

The overall fenestration pattern of the blacksmith shop appears to be historic, and most doors and windows are likely original. The brick building mass is marked by a series of garage door openings which retain their historic doors; each opening holds a pair of two-part, hinged wood doors. Most windows are wood-framed, 6-over-6 double-hung. A large garage opening on the north elevation holds a modern pair of large, plywood doors.

History

This site occupies a portion of a large tract of land that, until recently, served as the primary shop facility for Cascade County. Active since the late 1930s, the facility was primarily used by the county's road and bridge departments, but was also utilized by other county agencies. This site, the only portion of the facility still in active use in 2009, includes a small office building and a larger structure that serves as a county paint and carpentry shop.

The Cascade County shop facility occupied a large, polygonal tract of land east of 3rd Street NW and west of the Great Northern Railway's Black Eagle spur line. The tract, almost a quarter-mile long and over 300 feet wide, was acquired incrementally by the county, with the first purchase occurring in 1926. The county obtained the bulk of the land, however, through a 1936 tax sale of the real estate formerly owned by the Sunburst Refining Company. Sunburst had developed an oil refinery in the West Bank area in the late 1920s, but ended operations in 1933.

Significant building construction at the county shop complex was underway by the late 1930s. The primary shop building, designed in 1938 and likely erected soon thereafter, was a large concrete structure with Art Deco detailing, located near the southeastern corner of the tract. To the west, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) constructed a similarly-sized brick building in 1939 (feature 1 at this site); this served as a warehouse and staging facility for various WPA construction projects in the region, and was transferred to the county after the close of the WPA program. Smaller, wood-framed structures present during the first years included a blacksmith shop (feature 2) and a carpentry/paint building. Fueling facilities were also present, and much of the property was used as an open-air equipment yard.

The Feature 1 building at this site was reportedly used as a shop by the county bridge department for at least a portion of its history. The adjacent blacksmith shop building may have also seen use by the bridge department, until metal fabrication and repair using blacksmith techniques became less necessary. It was then used primarily for storage.

The tract continued to serve as the Cascade County shop until 2008, when a new, $6.4 million shop complex was completed at a site near Interstate 15, 7 miles west of Great Falls. The large 1938 shop building was razed soon thereafter, and most of the old site was vacated. The two buildings that comprise this site are used for equipment storage in 2009.

Significance

The primary building at this site, a large warehouse with Deco detailing, is historically significant for its initial role as a central warehouse for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program in the Great Falls area. As such, the building was a focal point for the WPA construction program in Great Falls during the late 1930s and early 1940s. The WPA program played an important economic and social role in the region during that period, helping to stabilize the local economy and constructing a number of highly-visible projects, many related to local parks and recreation.

After the close of the WPA program, the building became the long-time home of the Cascade County Shop, primarily serving the road and bridge departments. These operations were a major focus of county government during the era, and the building is also significant for this association.

The building is also noteworthy for the Art Deco/Moderne design elements incorporated into its construction, an unusual quality for an industrial building. This is reflective of the design focus of the WPA program as a whole, and gave the facility a design compatibility with the 1930s-era structures erected at the Montana State Fair grounds across the street.

For these reasons, this site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, with significance under Criteria "A" and "C."



Figure 21. 24CA1387: Cascade County Public Works Warehouse, shop building (feature 1), south elevation. View to northeast.

Site 24CA1388: Sunburst Oil Office

Description

The Sunburst Oil Office building (later converted into a house) is on the southern fringe of what was the site of the Sunburst Oil Refinery in the 1920s and 1930s. The property currently consists of a house (Feature 1) and a garage (Feature 2), both of which face north toward 4th Avenue Northwest. A smaller but still grassy yard lined by mature conifers and bushes provide the property a distinct residential character in an otherwise industrial corridor. The immediate site setting is further enhanced by an historic-age white picket fence running along the yard's front (north) and eastern perimeters.

Erected about 1923, Feature 1 is a one story building of brick masonry construction. While it first saw use as an office, the building likely presented a house-like appearance from the beginning. With a somewhat square-shaped plan (23 feet by 31 feet) and prominent hip roof, it is reminiscent of a four-square cottage in form and massing. At the same time, many of the building's trim details recall the Craftsman Style, one of the most popular architectural forms for new house construction nationwide through the 1910s and 1920s. The foundation is rough-cut stone masonry, now partially covered by a thin veneer of stucco. The hip roof has a short center ridge, open eaves with a wide overhangs, and exposed rafter tips.

The front (north) façade displays very symmetrical fenestration. The main entry is centered on the wall; it is flanked by paired window sets (one each side). All three openings have segmental brick arch headers and brick sills. An historic, half-light paneled-wood door remains at the entry. Windows are original one-over-one double hungs with wooden sashes. All four have been fitted aluminum sash storms. Both sets of windows feature historic wooden flower boxes (one each) supported by small Craftsman knee braces.

A small open porch fronts the main entry. It has a crudely built replacement deck and railings made of boards and posts. The original jerkinhead roof remains, supported on large Craftsman knee braces. Eaves of the roof are open and extended. Rafter tips are exposed.

Fenestration elsewhere is also symmetrical. Paired double-hung windows likewise predominate. A vestibule is found on the east elevation, centered between two sets of windows. It has clapboard wall siding, a jerkinhead roof with extended eaves, a modern screen door at the entry (east elevation), and a pair of wood-sash fixed windows on the north and south elevations both. A short shed-roofed hood is above the entry.

Feature 2 is a historic-age garage, which was moved to this property from another location in the early 1990s. It took the place of an old "shed." The design and material of the garage are suggestive of construction in the 1920s or 1930s.

History

Feature 1 began its life history as an office for the Sunburst Refining Company. Construction of the office presumably occurred in 1923, the same year that the company erected its oil refining

complex of stills, condensers and tanks just to the north between the railroad and 3rd St. Northwest. Sunburst was one of the first three refinery erected in Great Falls following the discovery of rich high gravity oil at the Kevin-Sunburst Field, about 85 miles north. The opening of the Kevin-Sunburst Field came three years on the heels of the oil discovery at Cat Creek in central Montana, the find and field that had ignited Montana's first true oil boom.

In addition to the office, Sunburst Refining established a laboratory south of the refinery. The laboratory stood about 50 feet east of the office. Both buildings were one-story, hipped roof brick structures, although the office was slightly larger. In contrast to the refinery and its strictly industrial setting, the company landscaped the grounds at the office and laboratory with a grassy lawn, trees and bushes. Trees were also planted along a dirt drive which ran in directly in front of the office and laboratory, linking the refinery with 3rd Street Northwest.

In 1933, Sunburst Refining shut down the refinery for good, seemingly in the face of bankruptcy. The refining plant, oil storage tanks and most other facilities were dismantled soon thereafter. The office, laboratory and a few other ancillary structures at the south end of the property, however, were left standing.

While not fully verified, available information suggests that by 1937, Philip and Alice Bradbury may have converted the office into their home. The city directory for that year listed Philip as the operator of a road construction business at the former address for the oil refinery (323 3rd St. NW), while noting that that he and Alice resided at that same address. By the early 1940s, the laboratory had likely been refurbished into a dwelling as well, and the former dirt drive to the property had become a city street, today's 2nd Avenue Northwest.

Significance

This unique property is significant for its historic use both as a residence, and a former office of the Sunburst Oil Company. The Sunburst Oil refinery was among the earlier non-rail industrial developments in the West Bank area, and was also among the larger such projects. Its construction reflected both the increasing industrialization of the Great Falls area, and the economic optimism generated by oil exploration and development in North-Central Montana during the 1920s. This building is the most visible remnant of the Sunburst project, and retains a high level of period integrity despite its change in use.

The property's conversion to residential use in the 1930s made this building one of a very small number of houses in the immediate West Bank area. The building reflects a straightforward vernacular foursquare style often employed in period residential construction, somewhat belying the building's earlier use.

For these reasons, this property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, with significance under Criteria "A" and "C."

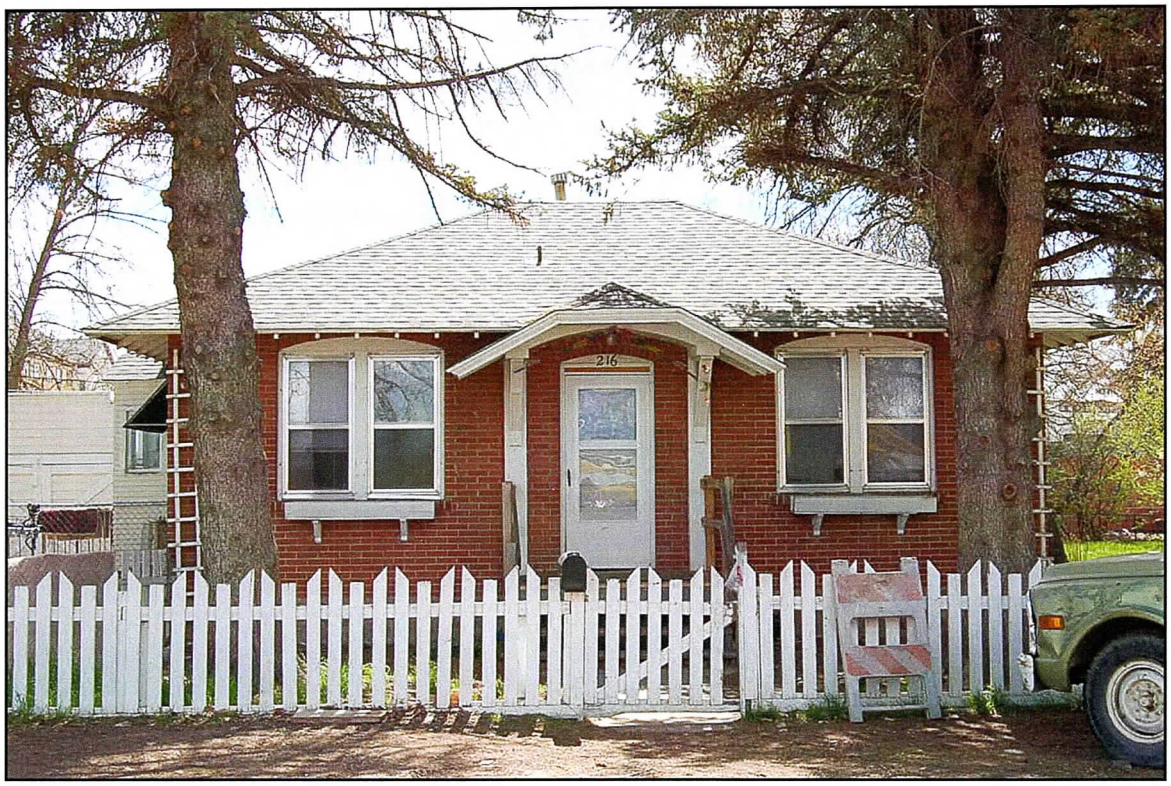


Figure 22. 24CA1388: Sunburst Oil Office / House (Feature 1), front (north) facade. View to south.

Site 24CA1389: Cowboys Bar and Museum

Description

Completed in 1941, the Cowboys Bar and Museum is a Rustic Style building made of uniformly shaped round logs. Several additions have been made to the original log core over the years, significantly enlarging its size. Most of those additions, however, are at the building's rear (east) elevation.

The building's original core is comprised of three interconnected log pens aligned basically north-south along the street. Wall logs at each pen are joined at the corners with saddle notches, and the tips have a decorative, tapered cut. Each of the three pens is 20 feet long in the north-south dimension, and the two outer pens originally measured 20 feet in the east-west dimension. The center pen was narrower, giving the original building a U-shaped plan with a recessed, central entry bay. A side gable roof covers the center pen, and the side pens each have a front gable roof. All three roofs have log purlins and rafters, and open eaves with wide overhangs. Extended beam and rafter tips are exposed under the overhangs.

The front façade of the original log core shows some modifications, although the historic appearance of the façade remains evident. The once recessed entry is now largely enclosed by a

shed roof and vertical board wall siding. Completed in 1964, this enclosure houses men's and women's rest rooms. A newer metal-sash glass door is centered on its facade. Large log-framed window openings are still present on the facades of the two side pens (one each). The original cottage-like windows with sidelights and transoms, all divided by log muntins, remain evident, although the original windows have been removed. All of the panes at the south window have been boarded, while the north window has been fitted with a smaller metal-sash window and log infill and its transoms boarded. These window modifications occurred in 1977.

The side walls (north and south) of the original north and south pens are both marked by a central, fireplace chimney flanked on both sides by a long narrow window openings set high in the wall. The two fireplace chimneys are both tall, rubblestone masonry structures. Each extends through the roof eaves. All four window openings are divided into three lights by log muntins. The former glazing areas have been infilled with wood.

Additions now cover the entire rear elevation of the building's original log core. The oldest of those rear additions is toward the north end of the building, or on back of the north log pen. Constructed in 1958, it is a 24-foot square wood-frame structure with a concrete foundation and a gable roof. Exterior walls have 8-inch board siding. There is a metal door on the north wall of this addition, and a boarded window on the south.

The second rear addition is a log pen built onto the original south log pen in 1977. It closely replicates its early counterpart in design and materials, having shaped round wall logs, saddle corner notching, extended log tips cut to taper, and a gable roof with wide open eaves and exposed log beams and pole rafters. This addition measures 20 x 24 feet. An entry on the north elevation holds a modern replacement door clad in metal.

There are two recent additions on the rear elevation of central log pen, which together fill the formerly open area (14-foot wide by 24-foot long) between the 1958 (north) and 1977 (south) additions. Constructed in 2003, the first of those houses a walk-in-cooler (14 by 12 feet). Only the shed roof of this wood-frame structure remains visible, with its east wall now obscured behind the newer recent addition. The later also is wood-frame shed-roofed structure (14 by 12 feet). The east (exposed) wall has vertical pressed board siding and a wood door.

History

The Cowboys Bar and Museum has served as a museum as well as the social and organizational headquarters for the Montana Cowboys Association (MCA) for nearly 70 years. The association traces its beginnings to a reunion of former Great Fall cowhands held in 1938. Grown men by then, the attendees had in their youth earned money herding local milk cows in and out of Great Falls each day for grazing and/or driving range cattle through the city's streets. Interest in the new Montana Cowboys Association grew rapidly and, in addition to other old Great Falls cowhands, men from other parts of Montana and elsewhere clamored for membership. Nearly 300 attended the organization's second annual reunion and banquet held in 1939. At approximately that time, membership requirements were expanded from just those that had ridden herd in Great Falls to include other Montana cowboys. Only men that had lived in the state and ridden a horse before 1910, however, were initially considered for full membership.

Almost immediately, some MCA members envisioned the creation of a museum dedicated to the display and preservation of cowboy and other old west relics and artifacts. William Shea, one of the driving forces behind the association, reportedly spearheaded the project. He offered a tract of property he owned on 3rd St. Northwest as a site for the museum and help organized dances to raise money for its construction. Association members were also asked to each donate $1 to the construction fund.

In common with many of his old Great Falls cowhand associates, William Shea was a prominent and well-respected citizen of the city. After having operated a horse farm for several years, in 1913 Shea took a position as a sanitary inspector with the City of Great Fall's Board of Health. He later ran a successful campaign for city major, served as a district judge and eventually was appointed the city sanitarian. He would retain that position until his retirement in 1956.

In light of the economic uncertainties of the time due to the Great Depression, association members and others generously contributed to fund raising efforts. Shea and his associates realized, however, that they required substantial additional support if construction of the museum was to proceed anytime soon. By about 1940, assistance had been sought from the National Youth Association (NYA), one of several New Deal programs created by the Franklin Roosevelt Administration to provide relief for the nation's unemployed. Formed within the Works Project Administration, the NYA targeted youth between the ages of 16 and 25 in financial need. Young men as well as young women could enroll in the NYA, unlike the better-known youth relief organization, the Civil Conservation Corps, which accepted young men only. The NYA offered youth academic courses to help keep them in school or retained them in work programs designed to equip them with job skills. NYA youth typically remained living in their communities with their family.

The MCA placed a group of NYA youth at work constructing the Cowboy Museum and Bar in late 1940 or early 1941. Each youth received a wage of $13 a month. The building was completed by late 1941 at a cost of just under $8,500. Donations for exhibit flowed into museum over the next several years and beyond. Some of the more notable items included a big-brimmed black hat worn by U.S Marshall-turn actor, Tom Mix, a rivet set made by Kid Curry, and an array of old guns. The artifacts were initially on open display in the museum building, rather than being enclosed in display cases.

The MCA also began operating a bar in the building at an early date, although precisely when this happened is not known. (The bar was certainly in place by the early 1950s, and it may have been an original feature of the building.) The bar business provided the MCA with revenue to maintain the museum building, as well as support its fraternal endeavors. The combination of a museum and bar in a single space was a unique feature of the building, and one that continues today.

Membership in the Montana Cowboys Association continued to grow in the 1940s, reportedly peaking at around 700 before the end of the decade. Requirements to join the organization were relaxed as the years went on. One early member later recalled that at the time of his acceptance the "rules included being 21 years of age and being an 'honorable man." (Women have never

been allowed to join the MCA, although an affiliated "Cowgirls Association" was active by the early 1950s.)

The Montana Cowboys Association added onto the bar and museum several times in the ensuing years. First around the mid-1950s, a small addition was built on back of the building's north log pen. In 1958, the association hired the Nugent Construction Company to construct a larger 20 x 24-foot addition at that same location. The early addition presumably was demolished and the new addition completed within the year. A wood-framed structure, it contained a storage room and office. Six years later in 1964, builder Bill Blake enclosed the recessed entryway at the front of the building, and installed men and women's rest rooms there.

The year 1977 marked the completion of the most ambitious new construction project undertaken by the Montana Cowboys Association since the opening of the building over 35 years earlier. Builder Dick Olsen erected an addition on the back of the building south log pen. While similar in size to the 1958 addition at the north log pen, this new addition maintained the building's original Rustic architectural character, being of log instead of wood-frame construction, The building interior was also extensively remodeled. Changes included installation of a new bar, bandstand and dance floor, and display cases for the museum exhibits, among others. (The bar was relocated from the north wing of the building to the center wing.) The project reportedly cost association members $50,000.

Significance

The Cowboys Bar and Museum is the architectural representation of the Montana Cowboys Association (MCA), a local fraternal order that has played a measurable role in Great Walls civic life since the late 1930s. The MCA is the only state organization dedicated to preserving the legacy of the working cowboy, a key element in both the history and lore of Cascade County and the state.

The building is also historically significant as a surviving construction project of the National Youth Administration (NYA), a New Deal-era public works program designed to provide employment and educational opportunities to young people during the Depression years. The building's well-crafted log and stone work is characteristic of the NYA and other public works programs, which encouraged the use of labor-intensive designs to maximize employment opportunities. The building's rustic design also gives it architectural significance. It is a quality example of public works Rustic architecture of the period, and the design remains evocative of the building's purpose -- a museum of frontier cowboy life.

For these reasons, the Cowboys Bar and Museum building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, with significance under Criteria "A" and "C."

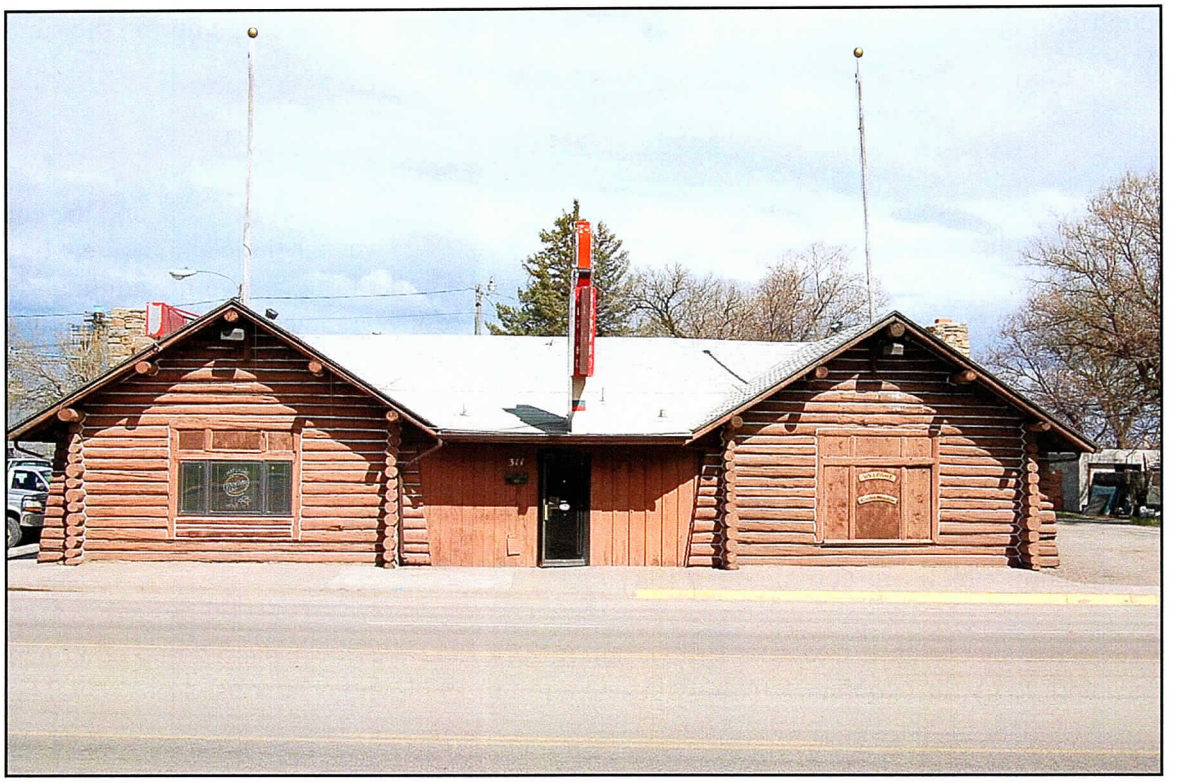


Figure 23. 24CA1389: Cowboys Bar and Museum, front facade. View to east.

Site 24CA1390: William and Isabel Shea House

Description

The former William and Isabel Shea House is a single-story residence displaying strong Craftsman design elements. The building has a modified rectangular mass, and faces east. The foundation is concrete, and exterior walls are brick, laid in a common bond. Most of the brickwork has been painted. The house has a clipped-gable roof, detailed with exposed rafter tips and surfaced with wood shingles. Gable ends are stucco. A brick chimney pierces the north gable face. Windows are wood-framed, and all appear to be historic; double-hung windows with four vertical lights over a single light predominate. Window openings are marked by brick lintel courses and brick sills.

An enclosed front porch occupies the approximate southern two-thirds of the west elevation. It is accessed by brick steps to the north, and features prominent brick corner posts. A continuous bank of 15-light windows runs the width of the porch. There is some modern infill around the entry door, and the door itself is non-historic. There is also a fully-enclosed rear porch, accessed by a brick stoop.

A small two-car carage, largely constructed of hollow clay tile, stood to the east of the house at the time project fieldwork was undertaken. This building was of historic age but was considred a

noncontributing resource due to a lack of architectural integrity. It was razed during the summer of 2009.

History

This house was apparently constructed in 1929 for William P. and Isabel B. Shea, and the couple lived there for the next three decades. "Bill" Shea (1888-1962) was a Minnesota native who arrived in Great Falls in 1900 with his family. He owned a horse farm as a young adult, and in 1913 was appointed a "sanitary inspector" for the city. A few years later, he became the city Sanitarian, a position he held until retiring in 1956. He married the former Isabel Harper in 1909, and she died in 1959.

Shea was a member of several civic organizations in Great Falls, and was also one of the primary driving forces behind the establishment of the Montana Cowboys Association (MCA) in the late 1930s. Shea offered a tract of land immediately north of this house as a building site for the MCA museum, which was completed in 1941.

The Sheas had no children, and after Bill's death in July 1962 the house passed into other hands. It was acquired by the Montana Cowboys Association in 1973, and is now used as a rental house.

Significance

Throughout the twentieth century, the West Bank area was primarily the location of heavy commercial and industrial development, a status encouraged by the availability of rail service and undeveloped land in relative proximity to Great Falls. The area was not platted for residential use, and only a very small number of houses were constructed here. The William and Isabel Shea house is the best example of this small group. It is a very well-preserved example of a small Craftsman cottage, an architectural form that was predominate during the first third of the twentieth century. It displays a relatively high level of architectural detail, and is relatively unusual for its use of brick rather than lapped wood exterior siding.

The house is also noteworthy for its visual and historic association with the Montana Cowboys Museum and Bar immediately to the north. William Shea, the long-time owner of this house, was also a founder of the Montana Cowboys Association, and provided land from this house's parcel to serve as the site of the Cowboys Museum.

For these reasons, the William and Isabel Shea House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places with significance under Criteria "A" and "C."



Figure 24. 24CA1390: William and Isabel Shea House, north and west elevations. View to southeast.

Site RTI-07: Staybridge Suites Hotel

Description

The Staybridge Suites Hotel building was under construction at the time of the site visit in May 2009. It is a four-story, steel-framed hotel building, constructed on a concrete foundation. The building's footprint forms a modified "U" plan, with a long north-south axis and shorter wings projecting to the east from each end. There is a complex hip roof over the structure, surfaced with asphalt shingles.

Many components of the building were reportedly standardized and assembled off-site, and placed together in a building-block format to assemble the finished structure. These components are wood-framed and sided. Exterior finishes had not been fully applied at the time of the site visit, but were expected to include areas of partial stone and brick veneer. Doors and windows are metal-framed units in a variety of configurations. Primary entries exist at the center of both the east and west elevations.

History

This building was constructed during the spring and summer of 2009, and was under construction at the time of inventory. Erected by James Talcott Construction of Great Falls, the

building was constructed as a property in the Staybridge Suites chain of extended-stay hotels. The design and specifications of the building reflected the architectural standards of the chain.

The 113-room Staybridge Suites Hotel opened for business in July 2009, operated by a hospitality management company named Pacific Inns, LLC.

Significance

Constructed in 2009, this building does not meet the 50-year guideline by which most properties may be considered for National Register eligibility. The building is not known to have any exceptional historic or architectural associations, and is therefore not eligible for the National Reigster of Historic Places at this time.



Figure 25. RTI-07: Staybridge Suites Hotel, east and north elevations. View to southwest.

Site 24CA1391: James Talcott Construction

Description

The building at this site currently consists of three ajoining, rectancular masses, connected in an approximate north-south row. All are vernacular industrial structures, on concrete foundations.

The northern mass is the largest by far; it was moved to this site in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Probably a manufactured building, it is metal framed with a gable roof. Wall and roof cladding is corrugated metal. All current exterior openings are on the west elevation; these include two large overhead garage doors, two person doors, and several two-light casement windows. All doors and windows are metal or metal-framed, and all appear to be non-original. Former openings on the north elevation have been infilled; that elevation is also marked by the gabled outline of a former building mass that was once connected to this building. The words "PACIFIC / IRON & STEEL" are prominately painted on the upper half of this wall. The east elevation of the building is blank.

The south elevation of the above building mass abuts a smaller, gable-roofed mass; its construction date is unknown, but it appears to be older. This mass appears to be wood-framed. It has corrugated metal exterior siding and a gable roof surfaced with rolled asphalt. Some of the siding appears to be non-original. The siding on the east elevation and south gable end appears to be original, while the remining siding is not. There are small wood-framed windows on the east and south elevation, while the west elevation has a person door ant two metal overhead garage doors. This fenestration pattern also appears to be non-historic.

The southernmost mass is also wood-framed, with corrugated metal siding and a gable roof surfaced with asphalt. The west face of the gable is is continous with that of the central mass. The siding is non-historic. Recycled, wood-framed windows are in the south and west elevations, and the west elevation also includes a person door and a small loading dock. The south elevation features a large false-front design. This is probably an older building, but one that has likely been moved to its current location.

History

The parcel on which these buildings stand was owned by the Great Northern Railway and its successors until 1995. Consequently, a sequence of historic occupation has been difficult to reconstruct.

In 1942, unknown parties reportedly erected three buildings at this site, the largest of the three being a 30 x 60-foot block attached to a 40 x 57-foot block. A smaller 25 x 40-foot building stood about 200 feet to the south. The occupant at that time is not mentioned in the sources consulted.

Several years later, in 1949, the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association built a grain terminal elevator at this location. Farmers Union GTA was a cooperative grain marketing organization that had formed in Minnesota in 1938. Over time, it grew "into one of the largest grain marketing and processing cooperatives in the world." Apparently initially the improvements at Great Falls consisted primarily of a terminal elevator. In about 1952, just a few years after Farmers Union apparently acquired the lease on this parcel, it added a large, irregularly-shaped warehouse building at the far south end of the parcel.

By the early 1960s, the city directories listed the parcel as the site of Farmer Union's Live Feed Division. It maintained that designation until 1975, after which the business apparently closed.

In about 1978, James Talcott Construction signed a lease with the Great Northern Railway for this parcel. Almost immediately, it removed the old grain elevator and feed plant, and added a warehouse building to stand just south of the two northernmost 1942 buildings. Talcott Construction had purchased the large steel building that now stands on the lot from Pacific Hide and Fur and moved it here. (Talcott Construction itself had moved to this location from its former place a few blocks north on 3rd Avenue NW. It had been at 711 3rd Avenue NW since the early 1960s.) At its new location, the commercial and light industrial construction company advertised that it specialized in "steel buildings, grain storage, crane service, demolition, authorized builder of Inryco." In 1995, it purchased the land parcel from the Burlington Northern Railroad Company.

The two 1942 buildings at the north end of the building complex housed Davidson's Antiques during the mid-1980s, if not longer. They were recently removed with construction of the Staybridge Hotel on the land parcel to the north.

Significance

The vernacular, industrial building mass is representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The building masses currently occupying this property, however, bear little resemblance to their historic appearance, and much of the building mass is not original to the site. Other buildings and structures that once occupied the property have been removed, and the property no longer has the ability to convey its historic associations. For these reasons, this site is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 26. 24CA1391: James Talcott Construction, north and west elevations. View to southeast.

Site 24CA1392: Montana Steel Building Company

Description

This building is a single-level vernacular Quonset-type structure, probably a manufactured building. It is metal-framed with a concrete foundation and corrugated metal exterior cladding. The building sits on an approximate northeast-southwest axis, and is roughly symmetrical in appearance. There are large, wood-framed garage door openings centered on both ends, each containing a modern metal overhead door. A louvered vent is centered above each garage door. All windows in the building are metal-framed, six-light units, with four-light hinged areas above two fixed lights. A pair of these windows is on each side of both the garage doors, and there are seven windows irregularly spaced on each long side of the building. Two metal ventilators pierce the center of the roofline

History

The Quonset hut at this location was erected in 1947 or 1948. The Montana Steel Building Company had purchased the parcel on which it stands in February of 1947, and incorporated in the same month. It opened its business on 3rd Street NW soon thereafter. Montana Steel Building advertised locally, "For your building needs, Quonset steel buildings, Stran steel

framing for farm and industry." John H. Duncan served as the company's general manager in the early 1950s. By 1954, the business had changed its name to Northwest Steel, Inc., and the title to the land was officially transferred in 1959. Northwest Steel, also under John Duncan's management at least initially, continued to occupy the building to 1982. It seems to have carried a more complete line of steel products than Montana Steel, including "Columbian grain bins, structural shapes, reinforcing steel, steel products."

Sources consulted indicate that the Quonset was vacant after 1982, although Northwest Steel remained an active corporation through 1985. In 1989, a second building was added to the parcel. This was the storage garage that until recently stood just south of the Quonset

Significance

The vernacular, late 1940s building is representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Montana Steel Building Company facility is representative of a common building form that was used several times in the West Bank area, but it is lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. Though the building itself retains much of its integrity, the change in use has altered the historic character of the site, and the removal of related buildings has lessened the integrity of the property as a whole. For these reasons, the building is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, though the building may have the potential to contribute to an historic district if one is later identified in the area.

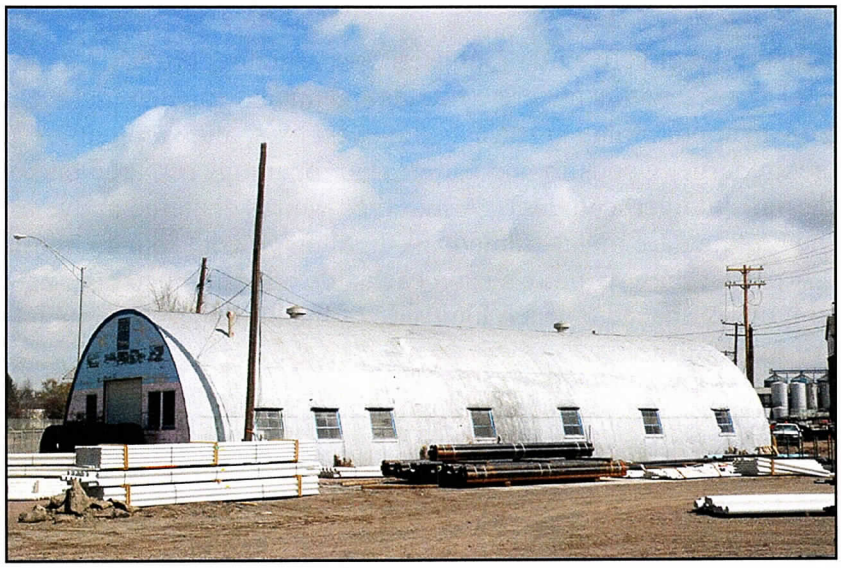


Figure 27. 24CA1392: Montana Steel Building Company, southwest and southeast elevations. View to north.

Site 24CA1393: Pat Motel

Description

This is a single-story building, vernacular in design, with a rectangular massing and a gable roof. The building has a concrete foundation and basement, and a gable roof surfaced with interlocking asphalt shingles. The walls are clad with wide-exposure lapped composition-board siding, almost certainly not original. Doors and windows are also likely non-original, and may be in non-historic openings. Doors are wooden and without windows, while the windows are wood-framed three-part casement units. A porch with a modern metal railing runs most of the width of the main (south) elevation. The porch is partially beneath the wide overhanging eave of the gable above.

History

Leonard W. Coleman gained title to the property on which this building stands in 1946. His first improvements to the parcel date shortly thereafter when he apparently erected a service station (site 24CA1394). In about 1955, he added to his business by erecting the Pat Motel just 40 feet north of his service station. The building described here was formerly part of that motel. Coleman operated the motel for several years, until the late 1960s. The configuration of the motel changed at about that time, however, when the Montana Highway Commission improved 3rd Street NW by widening and other alterations. Originally an L-shaped building, the motel was reduced in size with removal of its west wing. By 1970, the city directory listed a set of four apartments at the Pat Motel/Northwest Camper Service address. This suggests that the motel function had been abandoned, replaced with residential use.

Coleman retained ownership of the parcel until 1986. Just one year later, the tax appraiser reported that the apartment building had been heavily vandalized and was no longer habitable. It remained in poor condition for 10 years before being repaired and converted to house a tax business.

Significance

These vernacular building is representative of a small number of non-industrial commercial buildings that appeared in the West Bank area. While the west bank area was not a significant retail district during this time, a few businesses opened here to take advantage of automobile traffic on Central Avenue (US 87), as well as the area's proximity to the Montana State Fair grounds.

This building is a small and highly vernacular commercial structure, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. A substantial remodeling has likely cost the building most or all of its historic integrity, and it no longer serves its original function. For these reasons, the building is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 28. 24CA1393: Pat Motel, west and south elevations. View to northeast.

Site 24CA1394: Coleman's Service and Repair

Description

This building is a small, highly vernacular structure, with a simple rectangular plan. It is likely wood-framed, and is built on a concrete foundation. Exterior walls currently have a non-historic cladding of corrugated metal; the original cladding is unknown. A shallow-pitch shed roof is behind low parapet walls on all but the east elevation.

All doors and windows appear to be modern, and it is likely that the overall fenestration pattern is non-historic. The primary (south) elevation is marked by a large overhead garage door. A metal person door is also present, as are two metal-framed windows. Another window exists on the west elevation, but the north and east elevations are blank.

History

This building was formerly a service station. Leonard W. Coleman may have built it shortly after receiving title to the property in 1946. The business was then known as Coleman's Service and Repair, which specialized in automobile repair. The service station continued to function in that capacity until about the late 1960s. At that time, improvements to 3rd Street NW

necessitated the loss of the gas pumps in front of the station. It seems that Coleman adapted to the changed circumstances by renaming his business "Northwest Camper Service." This suggests an attempt to attract more tourist business.

Although Coleman retained ownership of the parcel until 1986, he apparently leased the former service station to others beginning at least as early as 1983. In that year, Marathon Seat Covers occupied the building.

Significance

These vernacular building is representative of a small number of non-industrial commercial buildings that appeared in the West Bank area. While the west bank area was not a significant retail district during this time, a few businesses opened here to take advantage of automobile traffic on Central Avenue (US 87), as well as the area's proximity to the Montana State Fair grounds.

This building is a small and highly vernacular commercial structure, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. A substantial remodeling has cost the building virtually all of its historic integrity, and it no longer serves its original function. For these reasons, the building is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 29. 24CA1394: Coleman's Service and Repair, west and south elevations. View to northeast.

Site RTI-08: Pizza Hut Delivery Building

Description

This is a small, vernacular commercial building, displaying minimal architectural detail. Rectangular in plan, the building has a concrete foundation, concrete-block exterior walls, and a shallow-pitch gable roof with built-up roofing material. Some of the rectangular concrete blocks are cast to display a simple diamond pattern on their outer face; other blocks are laid in a pattern of vertically alternating recessed and projecting blocks. These qualities provide the building's only architectural detail.

The only visible openings on the walls are on the east elevation. A paneled wood overhead garage door is to the south, and two metal man doors are located further north. Portions of the wall surface are obscured by equipment and fencing.

History

The building was erected in 1965 by unknown parties. Building records indicate that it was remodeled in 1986, but apparently only on the interior as no exterior changes are obvious. For at least a part of its history, the building was occupied by a Pizza Hut kitchen, offering take out and delivery services only.

Significance

Constructed in 1965, this building does not meet the 50-year guideline by which most properties may be considered for National Register eligibility. The building is not known to have any exceptional historic or architectural associations, and is therefore not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at this time.



Figure 30. RTI-08: Pizza Hut Delivery Building, south and east elevations. View to northwest.

Site RTI-09: Missouri River Federal Courthouse

Description

This building is located in the West Bank Urban Renewal District (WBUR), Great Falls, Montana. Primarily an industrial corridor until recent years, the WBUR district lies along the west bank of the Missouri River just across the river from Great Falls historic downtown. More precisely, it is between the river and a spur of the BNSF (former Great Northern) Railway on the east and 3rd Street SW and NW (either side of Central Ave.) on the west.

The Missouri River Federal Courthouse building was under construction at the time of field survey in May 2009. The building is a three-story structure, steel-framed with a concrete foundation and flat roof. The primary elevation faces Central Avenue (to the south), and is defined by prominent polygonal bays at both corners. The southwestern bay is two stories in height, while the southeastern bay is a full three stories high and is topped by a domed roof. A shallow curved bay is also incorporated into the east façade of the building.

Most exterior walls are brick veneered, and are detailed with stone belt courses. The southeastern bay is offset from the remainder of the building by areas of metal wall cladding containing banks of vertical, multi-story windows, a design intended to evoke the waterfalls of the Missouri River. All doors and windows are metal-framed.

History

This building was constructed to serve as a federal courthouse facility for the city of Great Falls, replacing the courtroom facilities in the older Post Office/Courthouse building downtown (215 1st Avenue North, constructed 1912). The selected site was on the west bank of the Missouri River, just north of Central Avenue; ground was broken for the new building in the summer of 2007. The $16,400,000 facility was built by Sletten Construction of Great Falls, and completed in the summer of 2009.

Significance

Constructed in 2009, this building does not meet the 50-year guideline by which most properties may be considered for National Register eligibility. The building is not known to have any exceptional historic or architectural associations, and is therefore not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at this time.



Figure 31. RTI-09: Missouri River Federal Courthouse, south and east elevations. View to northwest.

Site 24CA1395: Ferris-Killion Implement Company

Description

This building is a very large, single-story commercial structure, almost wholly of vernacular design. The building has a strongly irregular shape, the result of the construction of a large series of structural additions over the years. (The building's likely chronology is described under "History," below.)

The entire building appears to rest on a concrete foundation. The majority of the building is steel-framed, with corrugated-metal wall and roof cladding; some of the building masses were likely pre-manufactured. The major wings display gable roofs, though smaller building masses have shed roofs. All doors and windows appear to be metal-framed. Full-light commercial doors are present on the east side of the north wing, and metal overhead and roll-up garage doors are present at various locations on the east and west elevations.

Two masses of the building display designs and materials which differ from those described above. The oldest central core of the building includes a large north-south gable mass ending with a decorative parapet wall on the south. (A similar wall may have once existed on the north, as well.) This mass is topped by a large sign at the ridge reading "PAYLESS FURNITURE." Immediately to the south of that mass, a smaller rectangular mass likely dating from the same period displays a modified gambrel roof. These roof and parapet details represent the only decorative elements on the building.

A manufactured Quonset building is to the south of the gambrel-roofed mass. The north and south ends of the Quonset are built of concrete block, and infilled door and window openings are present on the south elevation. A projecting bay on the east wall of the Quonset holds a roll-up garage door.

History

The oldest of the buildings in this complex is a T-shaped building whose cross-member forms the northernmost projection. It was built in the early 1950s, no later than 1952. It was almost certainly built by the Ferris-Killion Implement Company, Inc. which incorporated in late summer of 1949 and opened a business at this location within a short time. The company, owned by F.D. Ferris and J.F. Killion, offered "Dempster implements, DuPont paints, [and a] complete line [of] hardware." For a time, it was one of the three largest farm implement dealers in Montana.

Ferris-Killion quickly added to its floor space. In 1954, the company erected the quonset hut that now stands at the south edge of the complex, and used it as its service department. Two years later, the company built a large steel building in the southwest ell of the original T-shaped building. At some unknown date, but perhaps at about the same time, it also erected a relatively small shed just west of the Quonset hut. The company maintained that building configuration for several years.

In 1971, after Mr. Ferris had died and Hugh W. Moore (a long-time employee) had assumed Ferris' share of the business, the farm implement sales, service, and parts departments moved to another location. The company, then known as Killion Moore, Inc., was run by Hugh Moore and J.F. Killion's son, Donald. It continued to use its property on Central Avenue for storage until perhaps the early 1980s.

By late 1985, Payless Furniture occupied the old Ferris-Killion complex. Six years later, a new building was added to the complex, this one on the east edge. Finally, in 2002, another building was constructed on the southeast side, and relatively narrow passages between the various buildings that had previously been open were enclosed.

Significance

The central core of this building is a remnant of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The building's original core likely displayed a unique and somewhat decorative design that was relatively unique for the West Bank area. Little of this remains visible, however, due to the numerous modern additions that have been constructed on the building, nearly enveloping the original building core. The loss of integrity caused by these additions renders the building ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 32. 24CA1395: Ferris-Killion Implement Company, west elevation. View to northeast.

Site 24CA1396: Montana Highway Commission Repair Shop

Description

The Montana Highway Commission (MHC) repair building is a single-story structure, displaying a vernacular industrial design. The building is rectangular in plan, displaying a north-south orientation. The building has a concrete foundation, and exterior bearing walls of red brick laid in a common bond. Scattered bricks of a contrasting, darker color provide visual detail. The building features an open-span barrel roof, surfaced with asphalt (poor condition). The locations of the roof trusses are marked by buttresses on the east and west walls, articulating those elevations into regularly-spaced bays.

The south elevation of the building has a parapet wall, delineated by courses of bricks laid in a contrasting pattern. The original north end of the building, however, has been removed; the northerly 22 feet of the building and the entire original north wall are no longer extant. The replacement north elevation is comprised only of plywood infill.

The only current entries to the building are on the south elevation, including a metal person door, a large garage door opening (infilled with plywood), and a smaller garage door leading to a large concrete loading dock area. A modern metal overhead door is in this opening. Areas of concrete work and infill suggest that this opening may be smaller than it once was, and that at least a portion of the loading dock area may have once been enclosed.

Large banks of metal-framed windows are present (in varying configurations) on the three surviving historic elevations. The largest window areas have six-light hinged units, with three fixed lights both above and below; these assemblages are arranged in banks of three. Nearly all of the window glass has been broken out.

Although the interior was not accessed, most of it appears to be a single, large, concrete-floored space.

History

This Montana Highway Commission (MHC) machine and auto repair building was one of a handful of state highway buildings erected along the West Bank between Central Avenue and the Great Northern yards. It was the northernmost of the buildings, and probably was erected in the 1930s. At some unknown date prior to 1958, two small buildings were added to the MHC parcel, one to the northeast and the other to the south of the main building. The MHC moved from this property in 1958. Ten years later, General Distributing (welding equipment and supplies) occupied the warehouse, and continued to do so to 1978. From 1983 to 1993, Holman Interior Decorating was the occupant, and supposedly thereafter the old warehouse was vacant.

At one time (by at least 1984), a small grouping of other buildings had been added to the parcel. These included one attached to the south end of the warehouse with an elevated loading dock, another smaller building perhaps 100 feet to the south, and a large Butler building just southeast of that. In 2002, the owner razed the two smaller buildings.

The north end of the building was razed at an unknown date, likely in conjunction with a Montana Department of transportation project to widen or improve Central Avenue West, which is immediately north of the building. (This change may have taken place with the current Central Avenue bridge was constructed in 1980.)

Significance

The vernacular, 1930s-era building is an early example of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the middle third of the 20th Century. Most were commercial in nature, but the Montana State Highway Commission also had a significant presence in the area, and this is the only former Highway Commission building to remain in the West Bank area. As such, it is a significant reminder both of the industrial heritage of the area, and of state government-sponsored construction in Great Falls.

The integrity of the building has been severely compromised in recent years, however, primarily by the removal of the north end of the building and the north façade. The loss of integrity caused by these changes renders the building ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

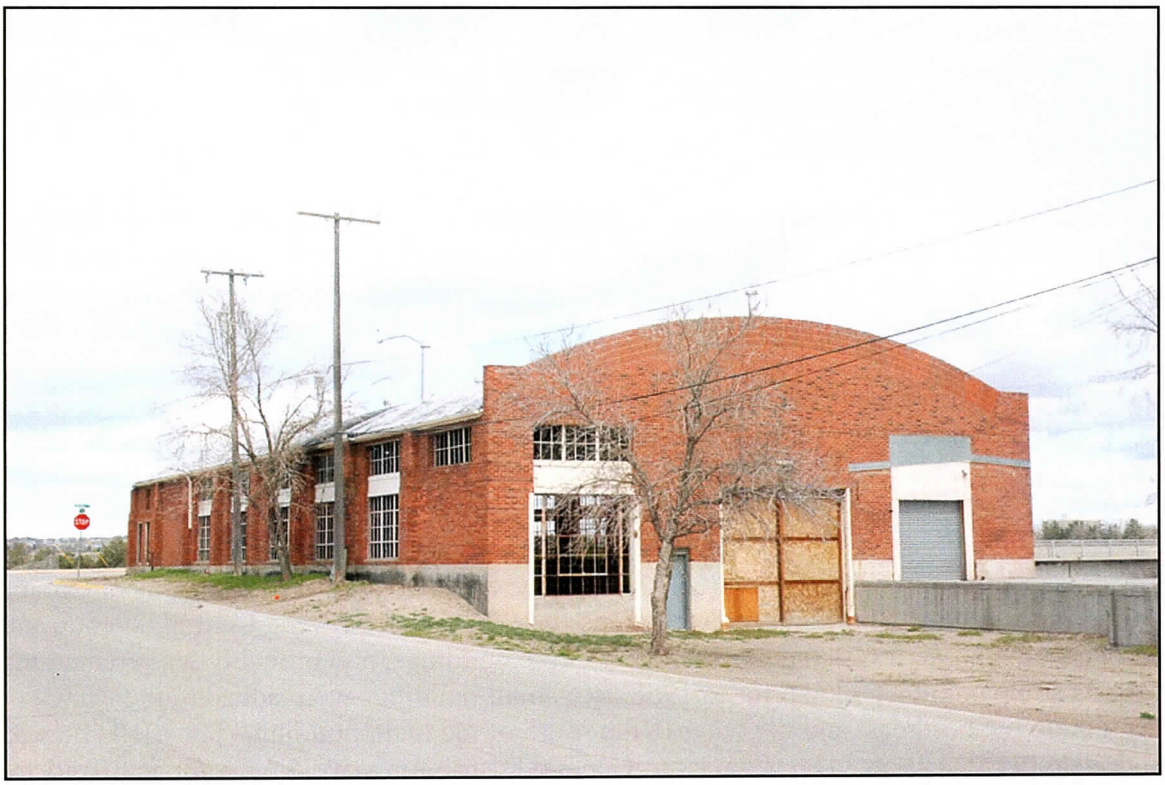


Figure 33. 24CA1396: Montana Highway Commission Repair Shop, west and south elevations. View to northeast.

Site 24CA1397: Kemhagens Service, Inc.

Description

This site consists of two vernacular buildings, both likely dating from about 1950. Both buildings exhibit a rectangular massing, and were likely used as warehouse facilities for at least part of their existence. The corrugated metal exteriors of the buildings also suggests the possibility that petroleum products may have been stored or used on the premises.

Feature 1 is the larger of the two structures, and is built on a north-south axis. It is wood-framed, with a concrete foundation, and an asphalt-clad gable roof. Exterior walls are covered with corrugated metal sheeting. The primary elevation of the building appears to face south. The inconsistent appearance of the siding on this elevation suggests that the fenestration pattern here may not be original, but it currently includes a modern metal overhead garage door, a metal person door, and a boarded window. The east elevation includes six windows of varying sizes, all but one of which are boarded. The west elevation, which faces a disused railway spur, has a paneled wood door at loading-dock level. The north elevation is blank.

Feature 2 is located southwest of feature 1, and is built on an east-west axis. It has a concrete foundation, wood-framed walls, and a wood-framed gable roof. Both the walls and roof are clas with corrugated metal. The east and west elevations each contain a paneled wood overhead garage door in poor condition. No other wall openings are present.

History

This site housed an equipment warehouse, apparently built in the early 1950s. The buildings may have been occupied by Kernaghans Service, Inc. for a time prior to the mid-1980s. Because the site was formerly located on a leased tract of Great Northern Railway land, no information about its builder or owners was found in the publicly-available records in Great Falls

Significance

These vernacular buildings are representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Kemhagens Service buildings are small and highly vernacular commercial structures, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. In part because of the vernacular construction and multiple material types, the overall level of integrity of the primary building is also less than certain. For these reasons, the site is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, though the building may have the potential to contribute to an historic district if one is later identified in the area.



Figure 34. 24CA1397: Kemhagens Service, Inc. (Feature 1), north and west elevations. View to southeast.

Site 24CA1501: Blue Ribbon Distributing Co.

Description

This building consists of two large masses: a north-south original mass, constructed in 1952, and a wing, constructed in 1963. The wing extends outward from the north end of the original building's east elevation. Both masses have concrete foundations and concrete-block walls, apparently load-bearing. Both the original mass and the addition are completely vernacular in design.

The original mass is topped by a wood-framed gable roof, currently surfaced with asphalt shingles. Eaves are shallow, and the gable ends are wood. The west elevation fronts a now-disused railway spur, and has a large metal utility door opening to a small concrete loading dock. A metal overhead garage door (not original) is in the south elevation, and the visible portion of the east elevation has a metal person door and two large wood-framed windows. The north elevation is blank.

The wing is topped by a shallow-pitch shed roof, sloping downward to the east behind low parapet walls. The south addition of the wing has two small glass-brick windows, and there is one such window on the north elevation. The east elevation has two modern metal overhead

garage doors; the southern door opens to ground level and the northern door opens to loading-dock level.

History

The warehouse at this location was built in 1952 or 1953 and served as a beer distribution center for many years, if not from its inception. Although the building's historic address was not first listed in the Polk Directories until 1962, an earlier listing of the Blue Ribbon Distributing Company at 15 1st St. SW (rather than 115 1st St. SW) might have been for this place. In any case, from the early 1960s through at least the mid-1970s, the building housed a series of beer distributors including the Highlander Distributing Company, Duff-Rosin Inc., and Giannini & Son Distributing. The large concrete block addition erected in 1963 on the east side of the original building was the work of the Highlander Beer distributor. By 1985, the warehouse was in the hands of the General Distributing Company, and leased by Cenex for chemical storage.

Significance

The vernacular, 1950s-era building is representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Blue Ribbon Distributing Company building is a vernacular commercial structure, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. Its original appearance has changed significantly due to the construction of a large addition to the building in 1963. For these reasons, the building is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 35. 24CA1501: Blue Ribbon Distributing Co., south and east elevations. View to northwest.

Site RTI-10: General Distributing Warehouse

Description

This building is located in the West Bank Urban Renewal District (WBUR), Great Falls, Montana. Primarily an industrial corridor until recent years, the WBUR district lies along the west bank of the Missouri River just across the river from Great Falls historic downtown. More precisely, it is between the river and a spur of the BNSF (former Great Northern) Railway on the east and 3rd Street SW and NW (either side of Central Ave.) on the west.

This is a single-story building, utilitarian in design and intended for use as a storage facility. The building is steel-framed, and the walls are sheathed with corrugated metal. The shallow-pitch gable roof is also clad with corrugated metal. The building is constructed on what appears to be a poured concrete pad.

There are no windows in the building. The only doors are on the west elevation: two metal overhead garage doors, each with a person door adjacent to it. No other detailing of any kind is present.

History

This modern building reportedly was erected in 1971, perhaps by General Distributing which then occupied the old Montana Highway Commission machine shop located on the same parcel (site 24CA1396). It presumably was used for storage.

Significance

This building does not display noteworthy historic or architectural merit, and is currently less than fifty years old. Consequently, it does not meet the criteria for National Register eligibility.



Figure 36. RTI-10: General Distributing Warehouse, west and south elevations. View to northeast.

Site 24CA1502: Martin Company

Description

This building is located in the West Bank Urban Renewal District (WBUR), Great Falls, Montana. Primarily an industrial corridor until recent years, the WBUR district lies along the west bank of the Missouri River just across the river from Great Falls historic downtown. More precisely, it is between the river and a spur of the BNSF (former Great Northern) Railway on the east and 3rd Street SW and NW (either side of Central Ave.) on the west.

The Martin Company building is a single-story structure of vernacular design. The building appears to consist of two adjoining, shed-roofed masses of similar vintage, one immediately east of the other. Both exhibit similar construction qualities: they are wood-framed, without apparent foundations, with shallow-pitch shed roofs covered with corrugated metal. The exterior walls of the eastern mass are sided with corrugated metal, as it the northern wall of the west mass. The remaining walls of the west mass are sided with horizontal planks and other wood materials. They give the appearance of being unfinished, and may have once had metal cladding or have been intended to have metal cladding.

The primary elevation faces north. It is marked by two large sliding utility doors, one clad in metal. A sign over the western door reads, "ZONOLITE / MONOKOTE / FIREPROOFING / MARTIN CO," followed by a telephone number. The west elevation closely parallels a railway spur track, and has a sliding wood door that would have allowed railroad shipments to be loaded into the building. There is also a 16-light wood-framed window on that wall. A smaller window exists on the south wall. Additional door/window openings, now covered with plywood or metal, appear to also exist on the south and west walls.

History

This warehouse may date to the early 1940s. The tax assessor's records note a 1941 construction date, which is consistent with the building's form and materials. In 1950 if not earlier, John Curtis Martin leased the lot on which the warehouse stands from the Great Northern Railway. Martin and his son John Leslie (Les) Martin used the warehouse in conjunction with their construction business. That business, specializing in fireproofing, ceiling tile, and drywall, spanned western Montana and even Wyoming. Les Martin died earlier this year (2009), and the business is now closed.

Significance

The vernacular, 1940s-era building is representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Martin Company building is a small and highly vernacular commercial building, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. Because of the vernacular construction and multiple material types, the overall level of integrity of the building is also less than certain. For these reasons, the building is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, though the building may have the potential to contribute to an historic district if one is later identified in the area.



Figure 37. 24CA1502: Martin Company, east and north elevations. View to south-southwest.

Site 24CA1503: Ojala Oil Company

Description

The Ojala Oil Company building is a large, single-story vernacular structure, designed primarily for use as a warehouse. The building displays a simple rectangular form, and rests on a concrete foundation. The walls and the gable roof are all sheathed with corrugated metal, which appears to be original.

The building's primary elevation faces north. and includes a small office area. A helf-light entry door is centered on the elevation, below a sign reading "MIDWEST MOTOR EXPRESS." Windows on that elevation include wood-frame units displaying four fixed lights over a two-light bottom-hinged casement. There are also two-light horizontal slider units which may or may not be original.

The building's west elevation parallels a railway spur, and has doorways designed to loading goods directly into the building from railroad cars. The east and south elevations have similar openings designed for truck loading. Doors on the east and west are overheas paneled wood units that are likely historic, while the south elevation doors are newer overhead metal units. It is possible that the south elevation openings may not be original. There is also a person door at the north end of the east elevation. Louvered metal vents exist in both gable ends.

History

This warehouse was erected in about 1956. When built, it stood at the north end of a group of three oil storage complexes on the east side of a railroad spur. This was the warehouse of the Ojala Oil Company, a distributor of Mobil Oil Company products. Hubert W. Ojala owned and managed the business. The warehouse housed Ojala Oil through the late 1960s or early 1970s. By 1974, however, it was identified in the city directory as the distributor of products of a competing oil company, Phillips 66. Ojala continued to own the warehouse until about 1985, when it was sold under contract to the Great Falls Shipping Association. It is currently occupied by Midwest Motor Express of Bismarck, North Dakota.

Significance

The vernacular, 1950s-era building is representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Ojala Oil Company building is a vernacular commercial building, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. Though the building itself largely retains integrity, the change in use and removal of adjacent oil storage facilities has altered the historic character of

the site. For these reasons, the building is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, though the building may have the potential to contribute to an historic district if one is later identified in the area.



Figure 38. 24CA1503: Ojala Oil Company, east and north elevations. View to southwest.

Site 24CA1504: Elk River Concrete Products Company

Description

This building is a vernacular, single-level industrial structure, metal-framed with a concrete foundation. The building is oriented on an approximate northeast-southwest axis, presumably in response to the alignment of a parallel railroad line just to the west. The primary building mass is a large, round-roof Quonset-type structure, likely a manufactured building. Exterior cladding is corrugated metal. Windows are metal-framed, six-light units, arranged singly or in pairs. Large metal doors exist at both ends of the building; the doors may not be original, but they are in historic openings.

Three additions, all historic, exist at the north end of the building. A small corrugated-metal vestibule addition is at the north end of the west wall. A larger shed-roofed addition extends from the northwest corner of the building. Both display materials and fenestration types identical to that of the primary mass. There is also a small shed-roofed addition at the north end with walls entirely of concrete.

History

This quonset probably stood here since the mid- to late 1940s. In 1949 the Elk River Concrete Products Company of Montana had its Great Falls office at this location. Under the management of W.R. Larsen, the company offered "'Cretex' precast concrete pipe, sewer, highway culvert and irrigation pipe." Not just a concrete pipe sales outlet, this location included a concrete pipe factory, according to the 1950 Sanborn map. In addition to the quonset, the map also showed a small addition on the building's north end and another slightly larger addition at the northwest. A pumphouse stood not far to the north of the Quonset.

The factory function apparently remained intact through 1969. After that date, Elk River Concrete no longer had a directory listing at this address, but continued to use the property for local sales and storage. Ralph M. Svedahl, the last plant manager at Great Falls, later worked with his wife at this location, supplying product to local customers until the mid-1980s. The sales outlet was closed shortly thereafter.

Elk River Concrete was a Minnesota company formed in 1917, that "from its inception, ... has been supplying various precast and prestressed products to the construction industry." Today known as Cretex Concrete Products North, Inc., it forms and supplies a variety of transportation concrete forms, from pipe and box culverts to bridge beams and pole bases. At one time, Elk River Concrete had at least four concrete pipe plants in Montana, one each in Billings, Helena, Great Falls, and Anaconda.

Significance

The vernacular, 1950s-era building is representative of the industrial and heavy commercial development that took place in much of the West Bank area during the 1940s and 1950s. A number of such businesses appeared near the west bank of the Missouri during the middle years of the 20th Century, drawn to the area by the availability of undeveloped land, the proximity to the urban center of Great Falls, and nearness to both rail and road transportation. Such businesses defined the character of much of the West Bank area throughout the last half of the 20th Century.

The Elk River Concrete building is a vernacular commercial building, lacking in noteworthy historical or architectural significance. Though the building itself largely retains integrity, the change in use has altered the historic character of the site. For these reasons, the building is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, though the building may have the potential to contribute to an historic district if one is later identified in the area.



Figure 39. Elk River Concrete Products Company, southeast and northeast elevations. View to west.

Site RTI-11: Montana Electric Cooperatives Association

Description

This building is located in the West Bank Urban Renewal District (WBUR), Great Falls, Montana. Primarily an industrial corridor until recent years, the WBUR district lies along the west bank of the Missouri River just across the river from Great Falls historic downtown. More precisely, it is between the river and a spur of the BNSF (former Great Northern) Railway on the east and 3rd Street SW and NW (either side of Central Ave.) on the west.

The building is a steel-framed two-story structure, partially built into the side of a low hill on the west bank of the Missouri River. Both stories of the building are above ground level on the east (river) side of the building, but only the upper story is above ground level to the west. In plan, the building is roughly "L"-shaped, with a primary north-south mass at the west, and a large wing running east from the south end of the main mass. Walls are veneered with brick in a running bond, and the complex hip roof is surfaced with asphalt. Doors and casement windows are metal framed.

History

This is a modern building, constructed in 1986 for the Montana Electric Cooperatives Association. The Association retains ownership of the building in 2009.

Significance

Constructed in 1986, this building does not meet the 50-year guideline by which most properties may be considered for National Register eligibility. The building is not known to have any exceptional historic or architectural associations, and is therefore not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at this time.



Figure 40. RTI-11: Montana Electric Cooperatives Association, primary (west) elevation. View to southeast.

Site 24CA1505: Milwaukee Road Bridge # NM-1138

Description

Milwaukee Road Bridge #NM-1138 is a sixteen-span structure crossing the Missouri River in the City of Great Falls, immediately north of the Central Avenue (US 87) highway bridge. Constructed in 1913-1914 for the corporate predecessor of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad ("the Milwaukee Road"), the bridge carried railway traffic until 1980. It was rehabilitated in the late 1990s to serve as a pedestrian crossing.

As built, the bridge was an open-deck structure with a total of 16 spans. Fifteen of the spans, each apparently averaging 65 feet in length, are of a steel deck girder design; the easternmost span is a steel through girder structure. (The eastern span originally passed over a roadway on the east bank of the river, and the through girder design provided additional clearance below the bridge.) Each of the deck spans includes two heavy steel longitudinal girders supporting steel floor beams; steel cross-bracing is present throughout. The through span includes similar floor beams and cross-bracing between two girders rising upward from deck level. Abutments are concrete, and intermediate spans are supported by solid concrete piers with angled upstream cutwaters. Pins and rocker arms connect the piers and the steelwork.

Originally, the bridge's floor beams supported the wooden ties of an open-deck railway track. A plank pedestrian walkway with a wooden guardrail was on the south side of the structure. Small cantilevered projections were regularly spaced on the walkway, providing pedestrian refuge in case of a passing train. Rehabilitation of the bridge for exclusive pedestrian use saw the installation of a solid deck running the full width of the bridge, and new guardrails on both sides of the structure.

Approximately the westernmost nine spans are on a tangent (straight), and run parallel to the Central Avenue highway bridge. The remaining spans to the east form part of a gentle northward curve that once carried the tracks in front of the Milwaukee Road passenger station on the east bank of the river.

History

The Great Northern Railway (GN) was the first to reach Great Falls (through a predecessor line in 1887), and it and its corporate successors have always been the predominant railroad in the Great Falls area. Between 1913 and 1980, though, competition for the GN was provided by a second railway, the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific. "The Milwaukee Road," as it was informally known, constructed a main line into Great Falls from the southeast in 1913, and later extended a branch northward into Teton County. The Milwaukee also built extensive yards and other support facilities in Great Falls, highlighted by a monumental passenger station on the east bank of the Missouri River in the city's downtown.

The vast majority of this development was east of the Missouri River, but the construction of a Great Falls-area bridge across the river was also a key part of the Milwaukee's expansion into the area. Accessing the west bank of the Missouri allowed the Milwaukee to construct its branch

into Teton County, and also provided a connection to the GN tracks leading to the massive Anaconda Company works at Black Eagle -- the most important industrial shipper in the city. In addition, the Milwaukee hoped to construct a network of other lines through the Great Falls area, including lines north and west. A Missouri River bridge was essential to this future strategy.

The Milwaukee main line to Great Falls was constructed from Lewistown, primarily in the summer and fall of 1913. As this work was underway, other crews employed by the Milwaukee and its contractors were at work in Great Falls, constructing yard facilities and beginning work on the Missouri River bridge. The summer of 1913 saw the pouring of all the piers for the new structure, accessed by a temporary falsework bridge that spanned the river. Though there were rumors that the bridge steel would be installed that year, as well, completion of the bridge was delayed until the following year.

The steel girders for the Milwaukee's Missouri River bridge were installed in May 1914, with the final girder being placed on May 20th. The first train crossed the bridge in early July. That summer also saw the beginning of revenue service on the Milwaukee line east of Great Falls. Initially, the bridge was used only to interchange freight cars with the GN line on the west bank of the river, but the Milwaukee's branch line to Chouteau and Agawam was completed by 1917. The tracks extended no farther, however, due in part to the Milwaukee's precarious financial position, and so the bridge never achieved the level of utilization that its builders would have hoped for.

The Milwaukee continued to use its Missouri River bridge until early 1980, when nearly all of its Montana operations were abandoned. The bridge was sold to Carl Weissman & Sons soon after, and that company made tentative plans to scrap the structure. Instead, however, the company donated the bridge to the City of Great Falls in 1997, and it was rehabilitated to serve as a part of the city's extensive trail network.

Significance

Milwaukee Road Bridge #NM-1138 is one of the larger railroad bridges to be constructed in north-central Montana, and one of only a handful to be erected across the Missouri River in the state. It displays a straightforward design that is reflective of many railway-built structures erected during that era. As such, the bridge is a significant example of railway engineering in the region.

Along with the adjacent Milwaukee Road passenger station building, the bridge is one of the most significant visual reminders of the Milwaukee Road era in Great Falls, and of the broader significance of the railways to the twentieth-century growth of the city. It was a key element of the Milwaukee's development plans in the city, and served as a railway transportation link in Great Falls for 65 years. The bridge retains an good level of integrity overall. For these reasons, Milwaukee Road Bridge #NM-1138 is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, with local significance under criteria "A" and "C."

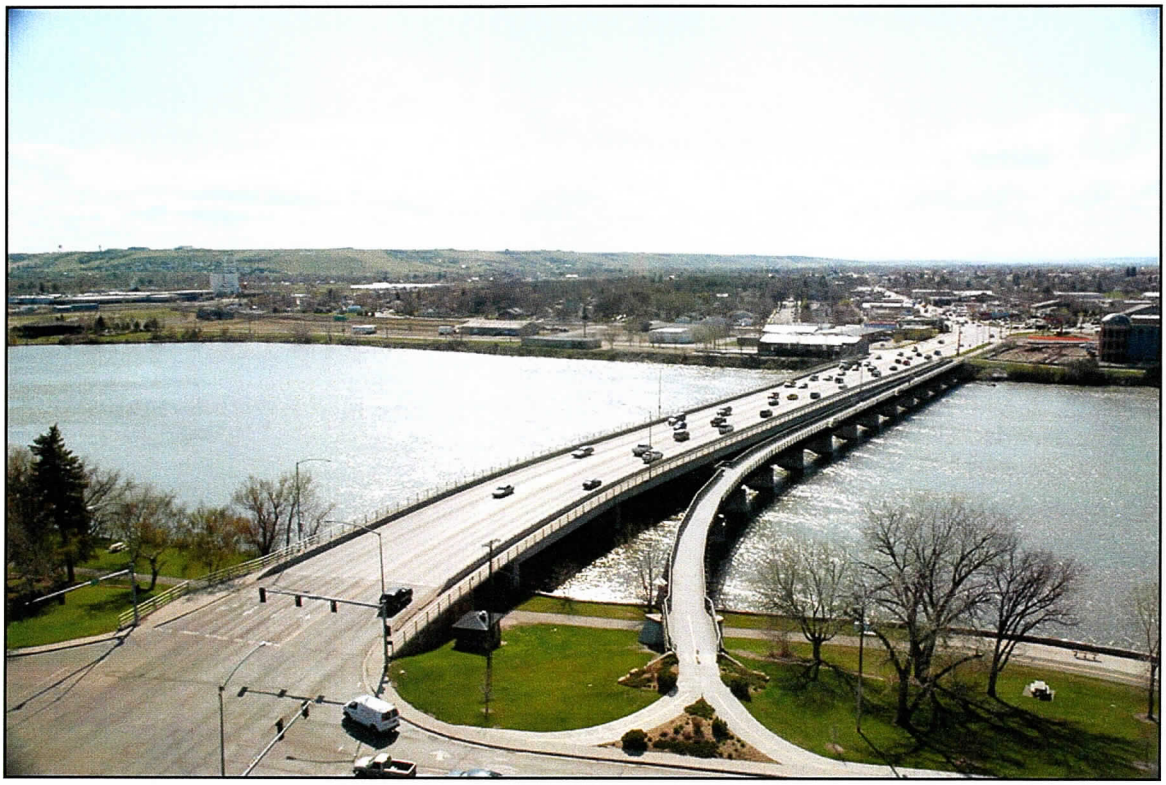


Figure 41. 24CA1505: Milwaukee Road Bridge # NM-1138. Central Avenue bridge (left) and former Milwaukee Road bridge (right). View to west.

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