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A REPORT ON THE

RE-SURVEY & EVALUATION OF THE

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT,

IOWA FALLS, IA

"COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

OF

IOWA FALLS, IA: 1855-1960"

Prepared for the
Iowa Falls Historic Preservation Commission
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INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2009 the Iowa Falls Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was awarded a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to update the Intensive Survey and Evaluation project that was conducted in the community during 1991-1992. The re-survey was designed to cover only the central business district with research focusing on the years 1940-1960. This report is the product of the 2009-2010 re-survey. Information gathered during the 1990s project is included in this report to provide a complete picture of Iowa Falls' commercial development. Additional information about this project can be found in the Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods section of this report.

One of the most important things to know before beginning a study of Iowa Falls (population 5,193) is that it is a "market town", not the county seat of Hardin County. The county seat is Eldora (population 3,035), twenty miles to the southeast near the center of the county. It is unusual for an Iowa county to have two towns of the approximately the same size. A similar situation is found in Lee County in far southeast Iowa which is home to Fort Madison and Keokuk. The two are relatively equal in population, and in this case, both have county courthouses.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Commercial Development in Iowa Falls, Iowa: 1855-1960

For the purpose of this document the period of significance begins in 1855 (the year that the town was laid out by J.L. Estes, Hosmer Stevens, and J.R. Larkin) and ends in 1960 (meeting the 50 year requirement established by the National Park Service for historic significance).

The first settlement in the vicinity of Iowa Falls took place in 1851 by Benjamin I. Talbott. His claim included the land where Iowa Falls is located today as well as land east of Rock Run. He built a mill and planned to lay out a town called Rocksylvania. Many people thought the name was too difficult to pronounce and spell. Another settler, Dr. J.F. Simons, suggested the name Iowa Falls. Years later Simonds told the following story about Talbott's reluctance to change the name,

> "Don't thee see," he said to me, "how Pennsylvania was named...sylvania is woods, and so it was named Penn's Woods, or Pennsylvania, and here are the rocks and woods which make Rocksylvania." I tried to comprise with him and call it Rockwood but did not succeed. (*Iowa Falls Sentinel*, June 3, 1914, p 1, c 6)

Ultimately Talbott gave up, sold his mill, and moved onto his land east of Rock Run where he laid out another small town and named it Rocksylvania. Much later this town became part of Iowa Falls, but the original blocks and streets remain as laid out by Talbott.

The original plat of Iowa Falls was bounded on the west and south by the Iowa River, on the north by Union Street, and the section line (one-half block east of Oak) on the east. (Figure 1, page 26) The location of Iowa Falls was eloquently described by A.T. Andreas in 1875 (p 485):

> The situation of the town is one of the most beautiful, picturesque and romantic in Iowa, being located on the east bank of the Iowa River, or as some say on the north bank, the river here making a great bend to the east. The principal part of the town site is on a gently rolling well drained plateau of ground, some seventy feet above the river, which here cuts its way through a deep gorge with perpendicular rocks or palisades rising on either side some fifty or sixty feet above the water.

The original plat contained 48 blocks, each consisting of eight lots measuring 66 feet by 132 feet. A public square was located near the center. The lots have a north/south axis except for those on each side of Main Street between Estes and Hickory which have an east/west axis.

Main and Washington Streets measured 80 feet wide while all of the others were 66 feet. The width of Main and Washington streets indicated from the beginning that the business district would not develop around the public square. (Figure 2, page 27)

When Iowa Falls was first platted most people felt it would grow up the hill from the river on the west (along Washington Street). However, the town actually grew on the hilltop or plateau, some sixty to seventy feet above the river which cuts its way through a deep gorge with perpendicular palisades rising on either side. In 1856 a three story stone mill was built near the south end of Main Street, and a stone hotel called the Western House was built at the southwest corner of Washington and Main. As the town developed, plans were made for a future railroad, and it was thought that the best place for the tracks would be along the south edge or town, at the crest of the palisade above the mill. Thus, the street nearest the river is named Railroad Street, not River, Front, or Water. Unfortunately, when the railroad arrived, the decision was made to cross the Iowa River east of downtown, and the tracks were laid on the south side of the river.

New settlers arrived in a steady stream throughout the late 1850s and 1860s. In 1863 and 1864 the *Hardin Sentinel* in Eldora noted the growth of Iowa Falls. Business was brisk, there were many new faces, several first class stores were being built, and others were planned. Mills were driven to capacity, a lumber yard was opened, and Lyman Wisner established the first bank in Iowa Falls in 1865. (Nichols, Pioneer Days in Iowa Falls, Iowa, pp 14-15.) In December 1865 the editor of the *Hardin Sentinel,* Marcus Woodruff, decided to move the newspaper from Eldora to Iowa Falls. In the first paper printed in Iowa Falls he wrote

> Ten years ago the 7th of August (1855) we alighted from a lumber wagon within 40 rods from where we are now penning these lines and turning our eyes in every direction saw but a single dwelling, a log cabin, and around about it a small farm lot from which had just been harvested a small patch of wheat and on which stood a few acres of corn. Some ten or a dozen faces, the entire population of the town, smiled a welcome to White's Mill, now Iowa Falls, which at that time had neither local habitation nor a name. Where now exists the teeming mart of our town, then stood a maturing crop of corn. Where now is heard the constant hum of active industry, the clink of the mechanic's hammer and trowel, the rapid stroke of the mill saws, the lumbering rattle of wagons and the tramp of teams, the Babel of tongues waging upon all sort of subjects, where now stand nearly 200 buildings where now move to and fro in the active pursuits of life over 1,000 human beings, then could be seen the single farmer's unpretending cabin and its half dozen inmates, surrounded by an almost illimitable solitude of woodland and prairie. Then an unreliable weekly mail brought us news ten days old. Now we have three mails per day. Then our nearest railway market was 150 miles away. Now we are within earshot of the locomotive's scream. Then the arrival of a stranger was the theme of comment for days and even weeks. Now the lack of arrivals daily is a wonder. Then a wilderness, now a rapidly growing flourishing village. It should be borne in mind that the bulk of this improvement has been made in the single year past.
>
> What then may we expect in the near future? In a few months at most the railroad will have given the town additional emphasis. The telegraph will transmit to us with lightning speed the intelligence of the busy work. (Ibid., p 13)

Marcus Woodruff wrote that editorial from the second floor of Sayer's Hall, a building still standing at 704 Washington Avenue. Built in 1857, Sayer's Hall has played a very important role in Iowa Falls' growth. It has hosted all kinds of social and political gatherings including: conventions, the Grange, railroad meetings, lodge meetings, and district court. Although the façade has been altered several times, the building has strong local historical significance. (Figure 3, page 28)

On April 15, 1866 the first train arrived in Iowa Falls, greeted by a large crowd of people at the depot. This was the Dubuque and Sioux City Railway, later to become the Illinois Central. A special excursion train ran from Dubuque to Iowa Falls on April 24. Evening entertainment

consisting of dinner and dancing, was held at Sayer's Hall. On the following day the excursion returned to Dubuque where another grand celebration was held. Both the *Dubuque Herald* and *Dubuque Times* carried stories of the celebration. (Ibid., pp 71-72)

For two years Iowa Falls was the end of the rail line. In 1868 a bridge was built across the Iowa River at the site of the present bridge. By May 1869 the Iowa Falls and Sioux City Railroad Company had completed the track from Iowa Falls to Fort Dodge, and another celebration was held. The Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern reached Iowa Falls in September 1880. A daily passenger train from Iowa Falls to Cedar Rapids connected with east/west trains. The town became both a freight and bridge division on the road, and a ten stall round house was built. Iowa Falls businessman E.S. Ellsworth recognized the need for a connection between Iowa Falls and Des Moines, and in 1903 the Des Moines, Iowa Falls & Northern Railway was built. Locally known as the Short Line, it later was extended to Mason City and ultimately became part of the Rock Island system.

The changes brought about by the railroads were many. Building materials, groceries, all sorts of goods, could be shipped rapidly and inexpensively by rail. No longer did everything have to come overland by wagon. The accessibility of these materials helped Iowa Falls grow. New businesses were added along Washington Avenue (locally just called "the avenue") to meet the needs of a growing population. A bridge was built across the Iowa River at River Street in 1868, and in 1869 when the town was formally incorporated, the population had reached 1, 200. (This is an unofficial estimate.) At that time the town could boast of five general stores, six groceries, two hardware stores, two drug stores, two furniture stores, two harness shops, a marble shop, four boot and shoe stores, three hotels, a printing office, four blacksmith shops, a wagon shop, four farm machinery dealers, two liveries, two grain dealers, a flouring mill, a saw mill, a machine shop, a woolen factory, a photo gallery, two millinery shops, one bank, four lawyers, three doctors, and three land agencies. (Ibid., p 18)

To demonstrate just how important the railroads were, freight records from April 1, 1873 to April 1, 1874 show the following shipments out of Iowa Falls: 280 cars of grain, 70 cars of stone and lime, 12 cars of potatoes, and 20 cars of miscellaneous cargo. The same records show the following incoming freight: 130 cars of lumber, 40 cars of coal, 15 cars of implements and household goods, and 12 cars of "miscellaneous." (Ibid., p 20)

A July 1874 fire destroyed almost all of downtown Iowa Falls, necessitating the immediate re-building of the business district. During the fall of 1874 the *Sentinel* wrote

> Whack, bang, rip, apparently all is tumult for the length of nearly two blocks on Washington Avenue. Twenty-six carpenters, ten masons, thirty-six skilled workmen in all, together with an army of shovelers, teamsters, hod carriers, and men of all work, though it may look like confusion, still you find all working systematically and rapidly, accomplishing a vast amount of work each day. (Ibid., p 136)

The town was forced to take on a more cosmopolitan appearance by the fire. By January 1875 twenty-three new business buildings had been constructed. The spring of 1876 saw new brick buildings being erected for Israel Klopp and J.L. Estes, a new fence was built around the public square (now Estes Park), and E.S. Ellsworth was elected mayor. For decades following the fire there was a certain uniformity of design in the downtown area because so many of the buildings had been built at the same time, by the same builders, using the same materials.

The building boom continued with the *Sentinel* commenting in 1880

> ...it is almost impossible to hire a carpenter, mason, painter, or laborer, every man that can build is busy, because the town is growing so fast. (*Iowa Falls Sentinel,* November 10, 1880, p 3, c 2)

In 1882 the excitement of the telephone reached Hardin County, and a petition was circulated to put telephone instruments in the courthouse in Eldora to connect with Iowa Falls and Ackley. February 1882 brought telephone wires to Iowa Falls and four businesses "have instruments in place." (Ibid., February 15, 1882, p 3, c 2) That same year the ladies of Iowa Falls decided that the public square would be improved by a pagoda. The fund-raising for this project took sixteen years (until 1898), with the total cost of construction being $277. Other improvements to the business district included the laying of board sidewalks in front of some buildings, with stone crossing laid across the major downtown intersections. The First National Bank constructed a new building on Washington that had "very fine" ornamental stonework on the façade, and the local foundry cast iron columns for the front of Winslow's new store. The newspaper noted that there was no longer a need to go to Chicago for such iron work anymore. A skating rink was opened on the southwest corner of Oak and Washington. Measuring 110 feet by 44 feet, it had a large reception room in which to put on the skates, a hard maple floor, and a 4 foot platform on all sides for the spectators. (Ibid., March 12, 1884, p 3, c 4) In later years a stage was installed so it could be used as a theater and meeting hall as well. In 1883 John Weiland recorded an unofficial Iowa Falls population of 1521. This figure may well have been accurate as the US census of 1880 listed 955 inhabitants, and the 1890 US Census listed a population of 1796. The town was definitely growing.

It was during the 1880s that E.S. Ellsworth (1848-1907) began to physically leave his mark on Iowa Falls. In his book Pioneer Days in Iowa Falls, I.A. Nichols wrote extensively of Ellsworth, saying

> I think that it can be said in all truth that Eugene Ellsworth did far more toward the upbuilding and advancement of Iowa Falls than any other citizen in the history of the town...He was a man of restless energy and keen business ability and rapidly amassed considerable wealth. (Nichols, p 325)

Ellsworth's family moved to Iowa Falls following the Civil War, his father opening a livery business. Young Ellsworth worked with his father, often driving prospective land buyers out to look at land, thereby gaining knowledge of real estate. In 1869 he opened his own livery, began handling land on the side, and found time to take a business course at a Dubuque Business College. He soon (1872) opened his own real estate agency offering land in several surrounding counties, and the following year he opened a loan business in connection with his real estate office. This was the beginning of a mammoth land and loan business. When the Cedar Rapids, Iowa Falls and Northwestern Land and Town Lot Company was formed in 1880 to handle the sale of lots in the towns along the B.C.R.&N line, Ellsworth was named secretary of the company, and the town of Ellsworth, Minnesota was named for him. (Ibid, p 330) That same year he hired L.E. Jones to work in the office, and four years later made him a partner under the firm name of Ellsworth & Jones. One of the first telephones in town linked the firm's office to the BCR&N depot, connecting the business district to the railroad.

Ellsworth owned thousands of acres of farmland in northern Iowa. He put the first steamboat on Spirit Lake in 1882, and, with some other investors, built the Hotel Orleans in Okoboji a year later. Over the years he established (or helped establish) Ellsworth College, the public library building, the first golf house and golf course in the community, the Zoological Park, and Ellsworth Hospital. In addition to his Iowa farmland Ellsworth owned thousands of acres of land in southern Minnesota, South Dakota and the Red River Valley. The Ellsworth and Jones loan business developed into a marvelous affair with offices in Boston, Chicago, Iowa Falls, and Crookston, Minnesota. It was said that from the time Mr. Ellsworth began lending money in 1873 until his death in 1907 no mortgage was ever foreclosed on a loan that he or is firm made.

Washington Avenue between Stevens and Fremont contains four buildings for which Ellsworth was responsible. In 1884 he built his first commercial building, the Ellsworth Block. This was a two story double storefront brick, on the north side of the street at 512 Washington. (Figures 4 & 5, page 29) He started buying lots across the street on the south side of

Washington, and on June 28, 1899 he announced plans for a magnificent opera house. The Metropolitan Opera House (NRHP) was "unsurpassed by any in the state. Among the actors playing the Metropolitan in the early years were Otis Skinner, Charles H. Hanford, Walker Whiteside, and Sousa's Band. Theater parties came from surrounding towns, often by special trains. The Metropolitan orchestra furnished the music for all opera house performances. From 1899 to 1944 E.O. Ellsworth (son of E.S.) was the manager." (Ibid., p 330) In 1901 he had a two story double storefront built at 418-410 Washington, the Ellsworth-Jones Building (NRHP) next door to the Metropolitan on the east was completed in 1902, (Figures 6 - 8, page 30) followed by the construction of a three story double storefront building immediately next door (non-extant). When Eugene S. Ellsworth died in February 1907 his funeral services were held at the Metropolitan Opera House which was packed to overflowing. Special trains brought mourners from Clarion and Eldora, while many other communities sent delegations.

Ellsworth was not the only businessman building new brick commercial blocks. In 1895 two fine two story brick blocks were built on the northwest corner of Washington and Oak, one for Shipley, Herriott & Shoenhair and the other for Daniel Griffiths. At the opposite (west) end of the business district the Women's Relief Corps (WRC) #48 decided to build a new two story lodge hall on their lot in 1898. This building was listed on the National Register in 1993. (Figure 9, page 31) These newest buildings also included "cement" sidewalks instead of the wooden walks found elsewhere. The city voted to install a municipal sewer system in 1899, and shortly after the turn of the century decided to replace all the wooden sidewalks downtown modern "cement" ones and to place waste receptacles in convenient places "to improve untidy appearance" of the business district. A new city hall was planned on the site of the old Stevens Hotel (southwest corner of Stevens and Estes). All of this activity spurred the two rival newspapers to each build a new building in 1904. The *Iowa Falls Sentinel* had a two story brick (NRHP), complete with rounded corner oriel window, built at the corner of Washington and Main. (Figures 10 & 11, page 32) The *Hardin County Citizen* built a two story artificial stone (concrete block) building on the east side of Stevens just south of the park. (Figures 12 & 13, page 33)

The growth of the business district was undoubtedly boosted by the strong rail system that intersected in Iowa Falls. The railroads provided excellent passenger as well as freight service. In 1891 the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern had two passenger trains and two freight trains leaving Iowa Falls northbound daily except Sunday, and two passenger and two freight southbound also. The Illinois Central had two passenger tains and an "express" plus two freights leaving eastbound daily except Sunday, and two passenger and three freights westbound. The Chicago, Iowa & Dakota had two passenger trains daily southbound and two northbound. (*Iowa Falls Sentinel,* January 7, 1891, p 1, c 1) In 1903 a new brick Union Depot (NRHP) was constructed on East Rocksylvania. Iowa Falls is unusual because the railroad tracks do not run through or near the central business district.

For years traffic moving in and out of downtown Iowa Falls was east and west along Washington. However, in 1897 Byron Bliss brought about the opening of a new north/south route leading out of Iowa Falls across the river. He platted the land on the south side of the river, and helped finance the building of the first Oak Street bridge in 1898. This played a major role in the development of Iowa Falls in the coming decades.

The first automobile arrived in Iowa Falls in 1902 with Frank McMillan at the wheel. By 1906 E.S. Ellsworth owned a Winton "Model K" and several other autos were seen around town. The spring of 1909 brought the opening of the first automobile garage in Iowa Falls. Built by W.G. Gohring just south of his blacksmith shop on Stevens, the 22 foot by 50 foot building was designed for the sale as well as repair of autos. (Figure 14, page 34) Sheridan Babcock soon joined the firm as a partner. Four different kinds of automobiles were offered by the firm of Gohring and Sheridan: Reo, Mitchell, Ford, and Overland. Within a few months two other dealerships opened. C.L. Gade was the agent for the "Lampert" and Nelson and Son decided to handle Jackson and Mason cars in addition to their implement business. The *Sentinel* was full of information about autos, dealers, owners, and speed limits.

> Speed limit set by city council is six miles per hour, but everyone is violating this ordinance. It seems the ordinance should ask all autos to drive on the right side of the street to help avoid accidents. (*Iowa Falls Sentinel*, August 10, 1910, p 1, c 1)

It would appear that many of the sixty-seven autos in Iowa Falls in 1910 were being driven in a somewhat reckless manner. Not content with driving in town, auto owners planned excursions to neighboring cities. A caravan of twenty-two autos carrying ninety-three people drove down from Mason City to have dinner at the Woods Hotel. The trip from Mason City was made in about three hours. More auto garages were springing up around Iowa Falls, with J.E. Dougan building a fine large 66 foot by 132 foot garage at 417 Washington in 1914. (Figures 15, page 34) This is the oldest of the extant garages in Iowa Falls. Six years later the Burkett-Johnson Motor Company built their new garage around the corner at 209 Oak.

There was talk of a new bridge across the river at the west end of Washington, and some citizens were recommending that the streets in the business district be paved. The Commercial Club ordered ornamental electric cluster street lights to line both sides of Washington "from the *Sentinel* corner (Main) to the Farrington corner (Oak)." (*Iowa Falls Sentinel,* October 25, 1910, p 1, c 2) With the installation of the new lights it was said that Iowa Falls had gained a metropolitan appearance. A few years later street lights were extended to the business section of Stevens. The official census figures for 1910 showed Iowa Falls with a population of 2797, but many businessmen disagreed. The directors of the Commercial Club completed their own count and found a population of 2965, a gain of 168 over government figures. (*Iowa Fall Sentinel*, February 28, 1911, local page, c 1) The much hoped for Washington Avenue bridge was completed in 1912. This opened a whole new area of town west of the river for development.

Like most communities, the first streets to be paved were in the downtown area. Eighteen blocks of paving were laid in 1912, ten on Main (leading from downtown to the Ellsworth College campus), six on Washington, and two on Stevens. As soon as it became known that Main was to be paved, the residents got busy and had a 20 foot strip in the center landscaped, creating a boulevard through their neighborhood. The following year twenty more blocks were paved, with six more being done in 1916.

The improvements downtown were not limited to streets and lights. Among the new buildings was the triple storefront Cuplin Block which was built in 1913 on the north side of Washington. (Figures 16 & 17, page 32) One block west on the south side of the street Dr. McClanahan erected a substantial two story brick building. (Figure 18, page 35), NRHP At the southwest corner of Washington and Main the 1850s Western Hotel was superseded by the Woods Hotel (non-extant). Just south of the business district St. Matthew's by the Bridge Episcopal Church (Figure 19, page 36), NRHP, was built on the corner of Railroad and Oak, perched on the palisade overlooking the Iowa River. In December the *Sentinel* reported that Iowa Falls had had a prosperous year with over one half million dollars spent for improvements in 1913. (*Iowa Falls Sentinel,* December 23, 1913, p 1, c 1)

Along the north edge of the business district lots on Main Street facing the public square (Estes Park) were selected as the site for the new Federal Building/Post Office. When the new Post Office (Figures 20 & 21, page 37), NRHP, opened in December 1914 the *Sentinel* carried a front page story with pictures. However, the month before the paper had been less than enthusiastic about the building.

> The work on the new federal building seems to be progressing rather slowly. There is too much "gingerbread" about the building. It would have been a better plan to cut out some of the "flub-dubbery" and given us stone pillars in front rather than wooden posts. It is rather a surprise that the government builds extravagant along certain lines and then reduces expenses by using wooden pillars on outside. (*Iowa Falls Sentinel,* September 29, 1914, p 1, c 1)

The first building to be built specifically as a movie theater, the Rex, was constructed at 615 Washington in 1914. The southwest corner of Washington and Stevens had long been the home of the First National Bank. In 1917 an elegant new bank building was designed by the Lytle Company of Sioux City, a firm which specialized in bank designs. Just twenty-two feet wide, the two story building (NRHP) was of brick with lavish terra cotta detailing in the Neo-Classical style popular for banks of the period. (Figure 22, page 38)

The biggest news of the early twentieth century was the routing of two federal highways through Iowa Falls. Talk of two great automobile routes passing through the community was heard in 1911, but it was 1916 before the dream became a reality. The north/south Jefferson Highway (US 65) was graded during the spring and summer of 1916, while the grading for the east/west Grant (or Hawkeye) Highway (US 20) was approved in August 1916. Both of these highways were transcontinental in scope, the Jefferson running from New Orleans to Winnipeg; and, the Grant from Boston to Seattle. (Figure 23, page 39) While all the discussion was going on about the two federal highways, the citizens of Hardin County argued the pros and cons of graveled county roads. After many problems, the whole primary road system of Hardin County was drained, graded, and graveled (68 miles in all) by November 1922. In 1929 it became generally recognized that gravel was not the answer for the federal roads, and the decision was made to pave. By October 1930 US Highway 65 was paved across the county, and in 1932 the paving of US Highway 20 was completed.

Oil stations (a new building type) were constructed in Iowa Falls along Oak and Washington, the routes of the two highways. In 1924 there were five oil stations located on Oak alone. It does not appear that any of these early stations are extant. In 1927 the city bought three stop and go signs for use on Washington. The automobile had changed the way of life even in rural Iowa counties.

Although the stock market crash occurred in 1929, the real crunch in Hardin County (like much of Iowa) came in 1932 and 1933. A review of the *Sentinel* from late 1929 does not reveal a feeling of foreboding. People were continuing to carry on their everyday lives. As noted earlier, major road paving in the area was accomplished between 1930 and 1932, providing jobs for not only the laborers but also for people involved with the manufacture of the machines and materials necessary for the project. There continued to be a few construction projects in Iowa Falls during the 1930s.

The green space just north of the business district was originally referred to as the "public square" when the town was platted, and continued to be labeled that way on the map in the Andreas Atlas of 1875, the 1903 plat map, and the Sanborn maps from 1885 through 1911. The 1917 Sanborn map shows this as "city park," and the 1930 Sanborn is the first to identify it as "Estes Park." Research continues to determine when and why this name was chosen. The present configuration of Estes Park dates to 1931. A landscape artist by the name of N.F. Guernsey planned the walks, shrubbery, pool, drinking fountain, even the amphitheater effect for the band shell which replaced the 1898 pagoda. This band shell was designed by L.L. Klippel and was built by private contributions made during the spring of 1931. The *Hardin County Citizen* (I.A. Nichols's newspaper) published a list of donors, showing that practically everyone contributed something in money or work, raising a grand total of $3838.25. The Estes Park Band Shell (NRHP) was dedicated in September 1931. (Figure 24, page 40)

About the only good thing to happen in 1932 was the completion of a new Washington Avenue bridge (extant). The first of the Iowa Falls banks closed its doors in June 1932 (State National). The mayor called for a ten day business holiday on July 4th. Bank customers were asked to sign waivers promising not to deplete accounts by more than 10% per month. Three banks were able to reopen under this waiver system (First National, People's Trust & Savings, and Security Savings). On Wednesday December 21, 1932 all three banks closed. It was five months before a new bank opened...the Iowa Falls State Bank opened for Business in the old First National building on the southwest corner of Washington and Stevens.

In 1929 two Greek emigrants (Harry Pergakis and Ernest Karrys) combined their businesses into the Princess – Sweet Shop, a candy kitchen, ice cream parlor, and café. It rapidly became one of the most popular establishments in Iowa Falls. On Christmas Eve 1934 the Princess burned. Even in the midst of the Depression the business was immediately rebuilt. Today the Princess (NRHP), in the 600 block of Washington Avenue, retains the sparkling black Carrara glass façade, with sophisticated lettering, and neon sign of the 1935 Art Deco design. (Figure 25, page 40)

Although there was little new downtown construction between 1935 and 1940, the local businessmen were constantly looking to improve their businesses and their community. On May 16, 1940 the *Iowa Falls Citizen* carried a front page article that might be considered prophetic:

> Farmers, Businessmen to Discuss Corn-Alcohol Plan
>
> The use of corn-alcohol blended gasoline as an anti-knock agent was discussed. "Corn-alcohol is almost ready to step out of the lab onto the highway."

Unfortunately, there does not appear to have been a follow-up article about the local reaction to this prescient idea.

1940 brought several changes to the street landscape in the Iowa Falls business district. The city council decided that parking along Washington should be limited to two hours, new sidewalks were installed in several blocks, and traffic lights were installed at two intersections that were on the highway: Oak at Washington, and Oak at Rocksylvania. Later in the year there was news of new construction planned for 1941. The city decided to replace the current City Hall on the same site (southwest corner of Stevens and Estes). This two story buff-colored brick building illustrates a simplicity of design which was first seen in the 1930s. Most second floor windows are grouped in pairs sharing a single sill. The parapet at the top of the building is capped by a simple stone belt-course, and the symmetrical entrance is highlighted by brick pilasters with stone trim in the Art Deco style. (Figures 26 & 27, page 41) While the new building was under construction all city offices were moved to the basement of the Estes Park band shell.

Two buildings on Washington Avenue from the same year are also constructed of buff-colored brick in a simplified modern design. The IOOF Hall at 521 Washington (next door to the Metropolitan Theater) is a two story double storefront building with a recessed central entrance, and an upper story entrance on the right side Windows on the second floor are banded by stone sills and lintels. The use of stone is continued on the parapet. An identification stone reading "IOOF" with the chain link symbol of the organization is centered above the upper story windows. (Figure 28, page 42 Next door at 523 Washington is the Strutz Building, also from 1941. It is a two story buff-colored brick building, with a single storefront, but the secondary elevation faces Stevens and received the same simple decorative treatment as the façade: stone sills and lintels above the windows, with a single row of brick corbelling at the parapet. (Figure 29, page 42) Dedications of the three new buildings took place in 1942.

This buff-colored brick was very popular from the 1930s through the 1960s and changes the character of "Main Street." No longer is the street lined with heavy red brick buildings. The light buff color seems to open the space. There are several other examples of the use of this buff-colored brick in Iowa Falls. 623 Washington, built as the Scenic City Land & Loan Building, was originally of concrete block construction. The present light brick façade and secondary elevation was applied at an unknown date to "modernize" the building

There was little other construction during the war years due to lack of materials. During this period the town was continuing to enjoy Thursday night band concerts in Estes Park, and the band celebrated its 50th anniversary. In the summer months the Commercial Club encouraged its members to close their stores at noon on Thursday to give their employees time off (probably due

to the lack of air conditioning). The need for a place for teenagers to congregate was recognized and a storefront located on Main Street was rented. Teens and adults worked together cleaning, painting, etc. This teen center appears to have been located in the same block as the Sanitary Dairy at the southwest corner of Main and Estes. According to Dawn Schwebke who worked at the dairy as a teenager, everyone met "at the Dairy." (Interview, November 2009)

Following World War II and the return of the veterans, things picked up in downtown Iowa Falls. The city council decided that "head in" parking should be banned, with only parallel parking allowed on Washington from Fremont west to the river. New metal street signs were ordered for the entire community, and there was a movement to build an airport. A special election in 1945 approved the airport, construction began shortly, and in May 1947 an estimated 7,000 people attended the dedication and air show at the new Iowa Falls Municipal Airport. 110 airplanes flew in for the flight breakfast that day.

The war years had seen automobile production turned to war production, and by 1946 people were eagerly awaiting the arrival of new cars. Figures show that there were 443 vehicles purchased in Hardin County in 1946: 323 autos, and 120 trucks. (*Iowa Falls Citizen,* March 6, 1947) Street re-surfacing had also been on hold during the war, so 1947 brought a city-wide street repair program. The first parking meters were installed downtown in 1948. That same year both the Central Motors and I.W. Braga auto garages (Figures 30 & 31, page) were built along Oak using the same buff-colored exterior found on the City Hall, IOOF Building and Strutz Building. By 1950 there were twelve new car dealers in Iowa Falls and in 1953 one of the dealers advertised

> 'We have on display the new Austin Somerset Deluxe Sedan. You must see this new English car. Many Americans are buying this amazing foreign car. Stop in at Gohring Motor Co. at 211 Stevens Street."(Hardin County Times, Sept 29, 1953, p 2)

The invasion of foreign cars had begun. By 2010 there were only two new car dealers in Iowa Falls.

The Commercial Club revived the annual Fall Festival with a street carnival and rides on Main Street. Fifty local businessmen formed a caravan to visit 17 towns to promote downtown Iowa Falls. The weekly *Iowa Falls Citizen* announced that they would start publishing twice a week (Tuesday and Thursday) and in 1948 longtime editor Ira Nichols retired. The *Citizen* brought in Carl Hamilton from Washington, D.C. to fill the editor's chair. Two years later Hamilton announced plans for the construction of a new building and printing plant in the spring of 1951 at 408 Stevens (on the east side of Estes Park). At that time Hamilton was editor of both local newspapers, the *Iowa Falls Citizen* and the *Hardin County Times*. The first paper to be printed in the new building rolled off the presses on July 31, 1951. Just outside of the business district, at the southwest corner of Estes and Fremont, Northwestern Bell Telephone erected a large building of buff-colored brick to handle the updated long distance and modern dial phone systems that were to coming to Iowa Falls. Dial service became available in January 1951.

Along Washington Avenue businesses were moving from one building to another, expanding, changing owners, changing names, Grocery stores had always been part of the downtown retail mix. However, in 1949 a step taken by one store, Piggly Wiggly, was the precursor of things to come. Piggly Wiggly closed their downtown store and opened a new one on Highway 65 South, south of Lewis Implement. This was the first store to leave the central business district (Washington, Main and Stevens) for a location that would provide ample parking for their customers. The days of the "Main Street" mom and pop grocery were numbered. A few years later Fareway would open a store on Oak between Estes and Rocksylvania, and other locally owned groceries sold out to chain stores. The city fathers recognized a need for more downtown parking, and in 1950 a city parking lot was created on the south half of the block bordered by Washington, Railroad, Stevens and Main. (One of the oldest stone buildings in town was demolished for this lot.)

The early 1950s brought another new invention, one that was to radically change the life style of Iowa Falls...television. Large ads for TVs filled the newspapers, and you could win a new Admiral TV just by naming the new supermarket. Keith Schwebke was the assistant manager of the Gambles store at the corner of Oak and Washington. One of his jobs was to install the roof-top antennas for the new televisions sets. He laughingly tells that he only fell off one roof during all the installations, and that was a single story house. (Interview, November 2009)

In the mid1950s the Merchants' Committee changed the weekly shopping night from Saturday to Monday, thinking (hoping) that this would be more convenient for shoppers. More parking meters were purchased and installed, and three streets around Estes Park were widened to allow more diagonal ("head-in") parking. The 1950s appear to have been a time when all communities across the state were working hard to promote their home town, and Iowa Falls was no exception. A *Hardin County Times* editorial said

> Lets settle on "Iowa Falls, the Scenic City" and promote it on all our signs, [and] in all other ways and means at our disposal." (May 4, 1954, p 1)

That slogan continues to be used today to promote the community. A Soviet delegation visited Iowa Falls in 1955. The visitors were given tours of plants, farms, and the Purina facility. They showed interest in costs and salaries. (*Hardin County Times,* July 25, 1955 p1) The 1955 Centennial Celebration was attended by 35,000 people who enjoyed parades, an aquarama and other events. There were two new gas stations built at the corner of Oak and Washington, and the local Ministerial Association protested the idea of Sunday shopping. It was rumored that one of the supermarkets planned to be open on Sunday. Changing times brought the sale of the Rex Theater building to the Moose Lodge and the sale of the Metropolitan Theater to Iowa Theaters of Des Moines. Iowa Theaters also took over operation of the Rex Theater.

Late 1959 brought the news that the two largest downtown banks, Citizens Bank on the north side of Washington, and Iowa Falls State Bank at the corner of Washington and Stevens both planned to expand. Each bank purchased the two storefronts immediately west of their present building and more than doubled in size. This expansion by the local banks indicated a strong belief in the local economy. This was strengthened by an article in the *Hardin County Times* (June 23, 1959, p 1) that announced that Iowa Falls had spent $11 million in community improvements during the 1950s...A Decade of Growth. The population of Iowa Falls had grown by 25% between 1940 (4,425) and 1960 (5,565).

CONCLUSION

Iowa Falls was platted and grew as a "market town," with a linear "Main Street" that extended from Fremont on the east to the Iowa River on the west. It was like many of the Iowa "towns [that] dotted the landscape, each with a length of Main Street devoted to the provision of goods and services or to the distribution of products and livestock." (Nash, E-5) The retail economy of Iowa Fall was directly linked to rise and fall of the agricultural economy of the surrounding counties. (loc. cit.) The linear development of the business district was probably based on two things. 1) The original plat included two streets that were wider than the others (80 feet vs 66 feet) and these streets intersected not far from the public square. 2) Iowa Falls was not the county seat. If Iowa Falls had been designated the county seat, there is the strong probability that the courthouse would have been located in the center of the square and the business district would have developed around it. However, with the designation of Eldora as the county seat (a decision that Iowa Falls tried to dispute), the need for the public square changed. It remained a public park, and the business district developed one block to the south along Washington Ave

Richard Francaviglia describes this linear Main Street plan as "...Main Street at its most functional..." (Francaviglia, p 78) A linear pattern creates a very different business district from that around a public square. John Jakle wrote that "this type of linear Main Street is tightly bounded by the architecture of the buildings lining it. (Jakle, pp 18-19) This is very true in Iowa Falls. Washington Avenue between Oak and Main is lined with two story brick buildings, constructed at the front edge of their lots, creating a common setback, an unbroken wall of masonry on each side of the street. This becomes almost like a brick canyon with the only open space, being the sidewalks and the street itself.

From the beginning the earliest buildings were constructed along Washington. Although many of the early buildings were probably of frame construction, the earliest that lasted any length of time at all were of limestone construction. The Western House (later Woods Hotel) at the southwest corner of Main and Washington was an early stone building and its location established the west end of the business district. Oak appears to have been the eastern end of commercial development. While Washington was the major street in the business district, side streets such as Oak, Stevens, Main, Estes, and Railroad all contained commercial buildings, but often on a somewhat smaller scale. The majority of buildings in downtown Iowa Falls are two story single storefront buildings. There are a surprising number of two story multiple storefront buildings for a community of this size. The 400 and 500 blocks of Washington contain seven well maintained double and triple storefronts.

The driving force for commercial development changed during the years. Originally, the arrival of the railroads appears to have been the major factor. However, the fire of 1874 required the rebuilding of downtown Iowa Falls, thus creating a street lined with new, "modern" buildings with a visual and stylistic cohesion. The role of E.S. Ellsworth in the building of downtown should not be underestimated. He personally was responsible for the construction of at least five major two story multi-front buildings between 1884 and 1902. This brought a major change to the landscape of the 500 block of Washington. The advent and popularity of the automobile, along with the attendant new building types such as garages (both sales and service), oil stations, and paved highways were another major force in downtown development. The routing of two US highways through downtown Iowa Falls ensured the strong retail health of the community.

It is interesting that it was the construction of new buildings which changed the face of downtown Iowa Falls from the 1860s until World War II. From approximately 1945 on however, the face of downtown was changed by upgrading the public features: changing in parking design, new sidewalks, new streetlights, the installation of parking meters, and the establishment of the first city-owned parking lot.

Despite the relocation of a few businesses to US Highway 65 south of the railroad tracks, the Iowa Falls business district remains a vibrant, viable retail area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The sense of time and place that is created by the visually cohesive commercial buildings along Washington Avenue between Fremont and Main Streets should be recognized by the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for a Washington Avenue Historic Commercial District. During the preparation of the nomination decisions can be made on whether or not to expand the district boundaries to include cross-streets such as Oak, Stevens, and Main. (Figure 30, page 43)

PROPERTY TYPES

Commercial Development in Iowa Falls, Iowa: 1855-1960

NAME: The buildings, structures, objects and districts representing "Commercial Development in Iowa Falls, Iowa: 1855 – 1960.

The resources (a collective term for the above named categories) associated with this context are unified by the fact that each was built in the central business district of Iowa Falls, Iowa during this time period and each illustrates the growth and development of the business community during this period. Buildings can be sub-divided into specific types: commercial/office, auto-related, and public.

BUILDINGS: Traditional Commercial/Office

Description. Commercial/office buildings make up the largest individual group of resources from this period. These buildings are rectangular in shape, varying from one to three stories in height, of masonry construction, with a flat roof sloping gently to the rear. These buildings fill the entire width of their lot (creating party walls), and were built at the front of the lot, forming a common setback from the street. Although the majority of Iowa Falls commercial buildings are two story single storefront buildings, there is a group of seven which are two to three storefronts in width. In addition to brick, materials used on the facades of these buildings include: metal, stone, cast stone, terra cotta, wood, and in a few cases, concrete block. These buildings were rarely architect-designed, being constructed by local contractors in the popular styles of the period, influenced by catalogs or local traditions.

Visually these buildings vary the most in terms of detailing on the façade. Decorative cornices, hood molds, quoins and other elements could be ordered from catalogs to give each building a touch of a popular style such as Italianate or Queen Anne. The details might vary, but the overall mass of the buildings remains constant. The differences are cosmetic, not structural.

Function. These buildings were built to house retail businesses on the first floor with the upper stories occupied by offices or by specialty businesses such as photographers, tailors, or in some instances, by fraternal lodges such as the Masonic and/or Odd Fellows organizations.

Significance. The resources in this sub-category are the best surviving examples of the commercial buildings that lined Washington Avenue, Estes, Oak, Stevens, and Main Streets in the Iowa Falls central business district between 1855 and 1960. These resources are the core of the downtown. They represent the most popular building material and popular styles found across Iowa in the century between 1855 and 1960.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Iowa Falls.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** the building must reflect the commercial development of Iowa Falls during this period, have been constructed to serve a retail/office purpose, and add to the overall commercial life of the community.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** the building must be directly associated with a specific person who played an important role within the community. The four extant buildings in the 400 and 500 block of Washington Avenue that were built by E.S. Ellsworth meet this criterion.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** the building must be good example of its particular building type (commercial) and/or style, displaying distinct characteristics that are representative of their period of construction, and/or have been designed by a recognized architect.

No resources have been identified that might have **Criterion D** eligibility, as an archaeological survey was not part of this project.

If a building has been moved, all seven aspects of integrity must have been retained. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, the original design, material and craftsmanship should be clearly visible, and the new site must be sympathetic to the original location and feeling.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retains sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resource should retain a sense of the original function as a commercial building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. For example, if steel casement windows need to be replaced, they should be replaced by steel casement windows of the same dimensions. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Most alterations to commercial buildings take place on the first floor storefront. Any changes made should be replacement, not remodeling. That is, brick in-fill of large display windows is not acceptable. Replacement of solid wood or metal doors with glass doors is not acceptable. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design. Buildings considered for individual eligibility will be required to have a higher level of integrity than those that are considered as contributing to a historic district.

Resources Identified as Individually Eligible
All are already listed on the NRHP

511 Washington	Ellsworth-Jones Building
513-517 Washington	Metropolitan Theater
601 Washington	1st National Bank
607 Washington	Princess Café
613 Washington	McClanahan Building
702 Washington	Sentinel Building
710 Washington	Women's Relief Corps Hall

BUILDINGS: Free-Standing Commercial/Office

Description. These buildings are free-standing, rectangular in shape and are of masonry construction. Roof shape will depend on size and use of building. These buildings are located along the edges of the central business district or outside of the CBD along highways. Building types included in this category are: gas stations, auto garages (both sales and service), supermarkets, drive-in restaurants, and other buildings located and constructed in such a manner as to provide ample parking for autos such as supermarkets. All of these types developed because of the popularity of the automobile. Paved parking lots are defining characteristics of this building type.

Oil stations will be the smallest of this type and the design will vary from gasoline supplier to supplier (Standard, Phillips, Texaco, etc) according to standardized plans of each company. These single story buildings are usually of masonry construction (brick, concrete or stucco) although later examples (from the 1950s) may have enameled steel panels on the exterior. The major design characteristics will include a canopy, small retail space, and possibly a garage section on the side for auto repair. Gasoline pumps and concrete drives and parking are part of the total design, not to be considered as separate objects or sites.

Auto garages will be large rectangular single story masonry (brick, hollow tile, concrete block) buildings. The early ones will have round arched roofs created by wide trusses to provide

the open interior space needed to drive in automobiles for either sales or service. Later auto garages may have a flat roof similar to commercial/retail structures. Early examples were built on the front of the lot directly next to the sidewalk, while later examples are set back from the sidewalks with paved parking areas to the front and sides. Large plate glass display windows and wide garage doors are the main defining elements of this building type. Pre-1940 garages may have a simple decorative detail on the façade, usually of stone or concrete. Concrete parking is considered part of the overall design.

Supermarkets (leading to other types of large chain store development) are large rectangular masonry buildings with an arched or flat roof supported by wood, steel or reinforced concrete trusses. This provides for the necessary open interior space. Large plate glass display windows are also a common feature of this type. Supermarkets are totally functional in design, with signage providing the only exterior decorative element. Large concrete parking lots are part of the overall design.

Drive-in restaurants make up a small building type within this category, but surviving ones will be relatively small free-standing buildings with a parking lot on at least one side of the building. Building materials used will vary from wood frame to masonry (usually concrete block) and the roof type will vary as well. Some early parking lots may be gravel instead of concrete.

Function. As noted above, all of these buildings cater to the automobile, either tending to the needs of the vehicle and driver (oil/gas stations, repair garages) or by providing ample space for parking vehicles. These are retail commercial/service buildings of a different type and size from that found in the core of the central business district.

Significance. The resources in this category all demonstrate the growing reliance on the automobile that occurred from the first decade of the twentieth century on. These are new building types, unlike those that catered to a horse-drawn society. The need for these buildings forced the expansion of business from the central core along "Main Street" to the edges of downtown, and even to the edges of town. These buildings represent the beginning of what we now think of as "urban sprawl."

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the impact of the automobile on the Commercial Development of Iowa Falls in the period 1909 to 1960.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** the building must demonstrate a direct relation to the automobile and its impact on Iowa Falls during this period. It must have been constructed to sell or service to autos, or to provide ample on-site parking for automobiles.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** the building must demonstrate a direct connection to an individual who played a significant role in the development of Iowa Falls during this period. At this time no buildings have been identified to have such a connection.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** the building must be a good example of its particular building type (oil station, auto dealership/service garage, supermarket, drive-in, large chain/big box store) exhibiting major characteristics of its type and period, or be the work of a recognized architect.

No resources have been identified that might have **Criterion D** significance as there was no archaeological component to this project.

If a building has been moved, all seven aspects of integrity must have been retained. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, the original design, material and craftsmanship should be clearly visible, and the new site must be sympathetic to the original location and feeling. In the case of oil stations, the new site must be on a major local route or highway.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retains sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resource should retain a sense of the original function as an auto-related building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. For example, if steel casement windows need to be replaced, they should be replaced by steel casement windows of the same dimensions. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Any changes made should be replacement, not remodeling. That is, brick in-fill of large display windows is not recommended. Replacement of solid wood or metal doors with glass doors is not recommended. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design. Buildings considered for individual eligibility will be required to have a higher level of integrity than those that are considered as contributing to a historic district.

Resources Identified as Potentially Eligible

401 Washington	Unnamed Auto Garage
417 Washington	Dougan Auto Garage
202 Oak	Central Motor Company
209 Oak	Burkett-Johnson Motors
320 Oak	I.W. Braga Motors
212 Stevens	Food Giant Supermarket

Buildings: Public

Description. Public buildings are rectangular in shape, with varying rooflines ranging from flat, to hip with dome, to partially gabled. They are usually of brick or stone masonry construction, with detailing of limestone and/or wood. Public buildings in Iowa Falls all feature a symmetrical façade. These buildings may be surrounded by a grassy lawn or a paved parking lot. As a rule, public buildings are architect designed, although no architect has yet been identified for City Hall. Public buildings are symbols of the community and as such are larger and more elaborate in design than privately owned buildings. Public buildings can be located anywhere within the central business district, but if there is a park or public square the public buildings will usually be adjacent to it. This is the case in Iowa Falls.

Function. Although located in the central business district, public buildings provide services rather than goods. City Hall serves as a centralized location for city services such as fire, police, building permits, zoning questions, etc. The public library was centrally located to be accessible to all those in the community seeking information or simply leisure reading. The Federal Building/Post Office was also centrally located to be accessible to business people as well as the general public.

Significance. These public buildings speak to the importance of Iowa Falls as a community. Although all towns have a city hall, not all towns have a building specifically designed and built for that purpose. Only towns of a certain size can afford a separate single use building. Libraries and post offices in small towns were usually located in one of the buildings along "Main Street" or around the square. County seat communities were ordinarily the only ones with buildings specifically designed and built to serve as libraries or post offices. The fact that Iowa Falls is not the county seat but has both of these public facilities demonstrates the importance of the community within Hardin County and the surrounding market area.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Iowa Falls.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** the building must demonstrate the specific service it is providing to the community, and why that service is needed in that particular town. For example, the Ellsworth Carnegie Library represents the free public library movement and recognizes the importance of Iowa Falls as a population and commercial center though it is not the county seat.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** the building must have a direct connection with a person who played an important role in the community's development. Ordinarily a public library would only be connected to Andrew Carnegie. However, in Iowa Falls, the library was partially funded by E.S. Ellsworth and could have Criterion B significance for this reason.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** the building must be a good example of its particular building type and/or style, displaying distinct characteristics of the period and style, be a good example of the use of a specific building material, and/or have been the work of a recognized architect.

No resources have been identified that might have **Criterion D** significance as there was no archaeological component to this project.

If a building has been moved, all seven aspects of integrity must have been retained. Specifically, there should be limited loss of architectural elements, limited alterations due to the move, the original design, material and craftsmanship should be clearly visible, and the new site must be sympathetic to the original location and feeling. In the case of oil stations, the new site must be on a major local route or highway.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the building retains sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resource should retain a sense of the original function as a public building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. For example, if steel casement windows need to be replaced, they should be replaced by steel casement windows of the same dimensions. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Any changes made should be replacement, not remodeling. That is, brick in-fill of large display windows is not recommended. Replacement of solid wood or metal doors with glass doors is not recommended. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design. Buildings considered for individual eligibility will be required to have a higher level of integrity than those that are considered as contributing to a historic district.

Resources Identified as Potentially Eligible

321 Stevens	City Hall	
401 Main	Federal Building/Post Office	NRHP
520 Rocksylvania	Carnegie-Ellsworth Library	NRHP

STRUCTURES.

The only structure included in this survey and evaluation is the Estes Park Band Shell (now known as the Bill Riley Band Shell). This 1931 structure is representative of the social side of the central business district. However, it is already individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and it is not within the geographic area that might be included in a potential historic commercial district.

OBJECTS.

No objects were identified or recorded during this survey and evaluation project. For that reason no guidelines have been established to determine significance.

DISTRICTS

Description. Districts are geographic clusters of related resources that are linked by common style, materials, builders, or use. The Iowa Falls central business district is visually cohesive and geographically well defined. It is made up of individual masonry buildings sharing a common set-back, similar rooflines, similar red brick exteriors, first floor storefronts of glass, and upper stories with windows and cornices creating a rhythmic pattern. Along the edges of the central business district will be found the free-standing buildings that grew up to cater to the automobile. The majority of buildings within a potential district should have been constructed within the identified period of significance. These buildings should share a common use or function, such as retail/office that is visible and adds to the sense of time and place.

Significance. A historic district is representative of common building types, in this case, commercial, and illustrates the development of the Iowa Falls central business district between 1855 and 1960. The number and size of these commercial buildings demonstrate the importance of Iowa Falls as a commercial/retail center within Hardin County and the surrounding market area.

Registration Requirements. Significance (use or form) relates directly to the Commercial Development of Iowa Falls.

To be eligible under **Criterion A** an historic district must reflect the importance and vitality of the central business district in the Commercial Development of Iowa Falls. The district as a whole and the individual buildings/businesses must illustrate the changing patterns of commercial development.

To be eligible under **Criterion B** a historic district must have a direct connection to an individual who played a significant role in the development of the Iowa Falls business district. Although E.S. Ellsworth was directly connected with at least four of the buildings along Washington Avenue, these are somewhat scattered and could not be called a district.

To be eligible under **Criterion C** a historic district must contain a set of buildings which are good examples of their building type, retail/office, displaying distinct characteristics that are representative of their period of construction, style, use of materials, and/or have been designed by a recognized architect. There must be a cohesive visual element to the district.

No resources were identified that might have Criterion D significance because this project did not contain an archaeological component.

Integrity considerations. In all cases, the most important integrity consideration is that the buildings retain sufficient elements of the original design, materials, and setting that the builder/original owner would recognize it. The resources should retain a sense of the original function as a commercial building. The basic shape and proportions of the building should be intact with little or no changes to doors and windows, or roofline. Replacement windows should match the original ones in terms of materials, size, and design. For example, if steel casement windows need to be replaced, they should be replaced by steel casement windows of the same dimensions. Additions to secondary elevations may be acceptable if they are of appropriate scale and proportion, and sympathetic materials. Any changes made should be replacement, not remodeling. That is, brick in-fill of large display windows is not recommended. Replacement of solid wood or metal doors with glass doors is not recommended. Signage should be sympathetic to the overall design.

It is expected that the storefronts of commercial buildings may have been altered to give present a more "modern" appearance. For this reason, some alterations to the first floor façade of commercial buildings may be acceptable if the upper stories of the building retain the original design and fabric. Metal cornices have often been removed to "modernize" or because of maintenance issues. While such alterations would not be acceptable for a building being considered as individually eligible (a key structure), contributing buildings in a historic district can retain a lesser degree of integrity. This integrity must include the overall size, shape, building material, and fenestration. Buildings which have been "slip-covered" with modern material must be considered non-contributing to the historic district. If the slip-cover is removed at some point in the future, the building should be re-evaluated. At least 60 per cent of the resources in a district should be individually eligible or contributing. There must be sufficient integrity of design and materials to retain a strong sense of time and place.

GEOGRAPHIC DATA

The geographic area covered in this re-survey and evaluation project is the Iowa Falls central business district. This includes the area bounded by Fremont on the east, Estes on the north, Railroad on the south, and River on the west for a total of ten square blocks (approximately 30 acres).

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS:

This Iowa Falls preservation project is part of a long-range program to identify, evaluate, register and protect the cultural resources of the State of Iowa. The objective of this 2009-2010 project was to re-survey the central business district that had originally been inventoried and evaluated in 1990-1991. The Iowa Falls Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) received a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to conduct an architectural/historical sites survey of the community during 1990-1991. The goal was to identify resources which reflect and represent the historical events and people who have shaped the community. The project was divided into two phases:

1) An intensive survey of the properties located in the central business district and a small business district in the eastern part of town near the railroad depot.
2) A reconnaissance level survey of the rest of the community.

As a result of that survey, a Multiple Property Document "Architectural & Historical Resources of Iowa Falls, Iowa: 1851-1941" was prepared in 1992-1993 with funding assistance from another CLG grant. At the same time, National Register of Historic Places nomination forms were prepared for nine individual properties within downtown Iowa Falls. The properties listed in 1993 include:

511 Washington	Ellsworth-Jones Building
601 Washington	1st National Bank
607 Washington	Princess Café
613 Washington	McClanahan Building
702 Washington	Sentinel Building
710 Washington	Women's Relief Corps Hall
401 Main	United States Post Office
Estes Park	Estes Park Band Shell
507 Railroad	St. Matthew's By The Bridge Episcopal church

Other resources in Iowa Falls that are also listed on the National Register include:

520 Rocksylvania	Carnegie-Ellsworth Library
719 River	Edgewood School of domestic Arts
RR at Rocksylvania	Iowa Falls Union Depot
515 Washington	Metropolitan Opera House
RR near North 1st Street	Mills Tower Historic District
Union Cemetery	Union Cemetery Gardener's Cottage
Oak Street	Iowa Falls Bridge
River Street	River Street Bridge
Washington	Washington Avenue Bridge

This re-survey was done because some buildings in downtown Iowa Falls had reached the 50 year point necessary for historic significance, and other buildings had been changed over the years. The HPC applied for, and received, another CLG grant to conduct this re-survey focused solely on the central business district.

Methodology:

The Iowa Falls HPC selected architectural historian/historian Molly Myers Naumann to serve as the principal investigator. Naumann had worked with the HPC on the previous CLG projects and was familiar with the community. She worked with the commission and local volunteers who were responsible for the fieldwork, photography, and archival research.

A team of volunteer photographers photographed each building and lot in the survey area, general views showing the relation of the buildings to others in the block, and representative streetscapes. An Iowa Site Inventory form was completed for each historic resource, including a map indicating location and at least one color photograph. City plat maps, USGS maps, and Sanborn fire insurance maps were used to locate each of the resources.

Volunteers were involved in the research conducted at the Iowa Falls Public Library, Iowa Falls Historical Society, and in the offices of the Hardin County Assessor and Recorder. The primary resources were the local newspapers available on microfilm: *Iowa Falls Citizen*, January 1940 through December 1960; and, *Hardin County Times*, January 1940 through December 1960, scattered issues.

The information gained through the research process was used in the development of the historic context "Commercial Development of Iowa Falls, Iowa: 1855-1960" and the associated property types. The principal investigator then evaluated each of the intensive survey sites and a determination of National Register eligibility was made: individually eligible, not eligible, or eligible as part of a potential historic district.

Results:

Field surveyors recorded 118 resources within the central business district. Of these 107, 91 had been recorded during the earlier survey and 27 were new. These 27 included a number of lots were are currently vacant, and several resources that are located immediately west of the historic downtown business district. Site inventory forms that were completed in 1990-1991 were then compared with the new photos and information.

Following this it was possible to determine that there is the potential for a historic commercial district in downtown Iowa Falls. It would include Washington Avenue from Fremont west to Main, plus six buildings on the north side of Washington immediately west of Main. Final determination on what parts of Oak, Stevens and Main streets to include should be made during the nomination process. (Figure 31, page 44)

This was strictly an architectural and historical survey, there was no archaeological component to this project.

LIST OF INVENTORIED & EVALUATED RESOURCES

ADDRESS	KEY	CONTRIBUTING	NON-CONTRIBUTING
204 College			X
312 College			X
322 College			X
403 Estes		X	
409 Estes			X
400 Block Estes, Lot			X
Lot next to 409 Estes			X
503 Estes			X
Lot next to 503 Estes			X
500 Block Lot			X
Pocket Park SE corner Estes/Stevens			X
600 Block Estes, Fire Department	X		
Estes Park Band Shell	NRHP		
616 Estes			X
711 Estes			X
715 Estes			X
119 Main			X
201 Main			X
205 Main			X
315 Main			X
323 Main			X
324 Main			X
401 Main, US Post Office	NRHP		
415 Main		X & X	
201 Oak		X	
202 Oak		X	
209 Oak		X	
211 Oak			X
212 Oak			X
220-222 Oak			X
315 Oak		X	
317 Oak			X
320 Oak		X	
507 Railroad, St. Matthews	NRHP		
516 Railroad		X	
523 Railroad			X
601 Railroad			X
615 Railroad			X
621 Railroad			X
600 Block Railroad, City Parking Lot		X	
701 Railroad			X
711 Railroad			X
715 Railroad			X
811 Railroad			X
813 Railroad			X

ADDRESS	KEY	CONTRIBUTING	NON-CONTRIBUTING
814 Railroad			X
818 Railroad			X
800 Block Railroad, Vacant Lot			X
210 River			X
212 River			X
212 Stevens		X	
308-310 Stevens		X	
309 Stevens			X
313 Stevens		X	
314 Stevens			X
315 Stevens		X	
316 Stevens			X
318 Stevens		X	
320 Stevens		X	
321 Stevens, City Hall	X		
406 Stevens			X
401 Washington		X	
400 Block Washington, Lot			X
408 Washington			X
409 Washington			X
410 Washington			X
412 Washington		X	
416 Washington		X	
417 Washington		X	
418-420 Washington		X	
422 Washington		X	
502 Washington		X	
503 Washington			X
508 Washington		X	
509 Washington, Pocket Park			X
510 Washington		X	
511 Washington, Ellsworth-Jones	NRHP		
512 Washington		X	
513-517 Washington, Met Theater	NRHP		
514-518 Washington		X	
520 Washington		X	
521 Washington		X	
522 Washington			X
523 Washington		X	
524 Washington		X	
601 Washington, 1st National Bank	NRHP		
602 Washington			X
603-605 Washington			X
604 Washington		X	
606 Washington		X	
607 Washington, Princess Café	NRHP		
609-611 Washington, Pocket Park			X
610 Washington		X	
612 Washington		X	

ADDRESS	KEY	CONTRIBUTING	NON-CONTRIBUTING
613 Washington, McClanahan Bldg	NRHP		
614 Washington		X	
615 Washington		X	
616-618 Washington			X
617-621 Washington			X
620 Washington		X	
623 Washington		X	
701 Washington			X
702 Washington, Sentinel Block	NRHP		
704 Washington		X	
706 Washington		X	
708 Washington		X	
710 Washington, WRC Hall	NRHP		
712 Washington		X	
714 Washington			X
716 Washington			X
720 Washington			X
800 Block Washington, Parking Lot			X
804 Washington			X
808 Washington			X
810 Washington			X
812 Washington			X
817 Washington			X
819 Washington			X
822 Washington			X

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_____ Individual National Register of Historic Places Documents for nine Iowa Falls resources: W.R.C. Hall; Ellsworth-Jones Building; Sentinel Block; McClanahan Block; St. Matthew's by the Bridge; Federal Building (U.S. Post Office); First National Bank; Estes Park Band Shell; Princess-Sweet Shop. 1993.

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May 26, 1880-December 1883
1884-1887
January 7, 1891-June 21, 1894
November 2, 1898-July 17, 1901
1901-1902
June 1903-November 1906
January 1, 1907-March 1909
April 1909-December 1909
January 1910-March 1914
April 1914-December 1915

Photographs

Frank Foster collection of historic photographs, Manuscript Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

ILLUSTRATIONS

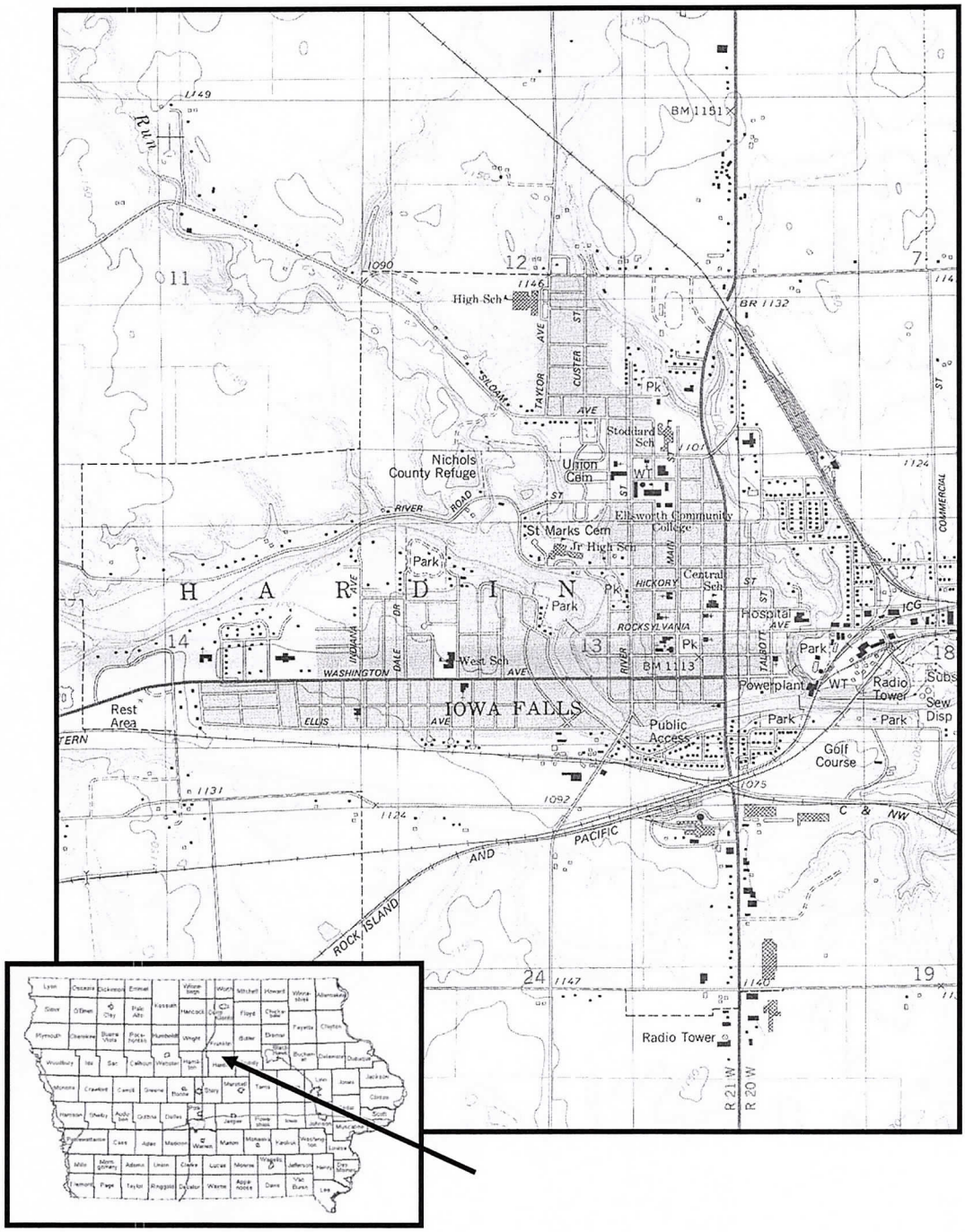


Figure 1
USGS Map of Iowa Falls
Location of Iowa falls is indicated by arrow on Iowa map

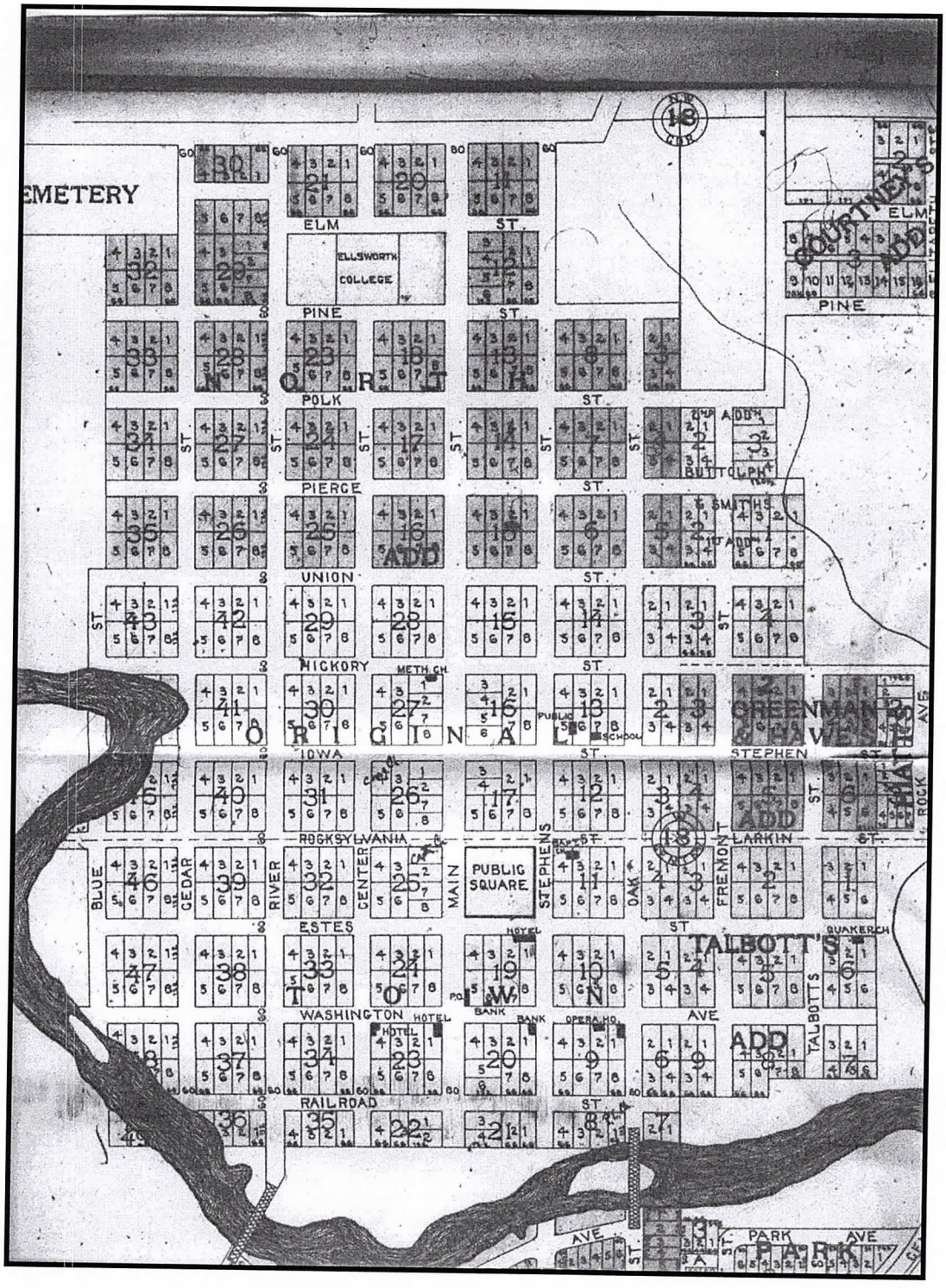


Figure 2
Plat map of central Iowa Falls
(1903 Atlas of Hardin County)



Figure 3
Sayer's Hall, 704 Washington Avenue

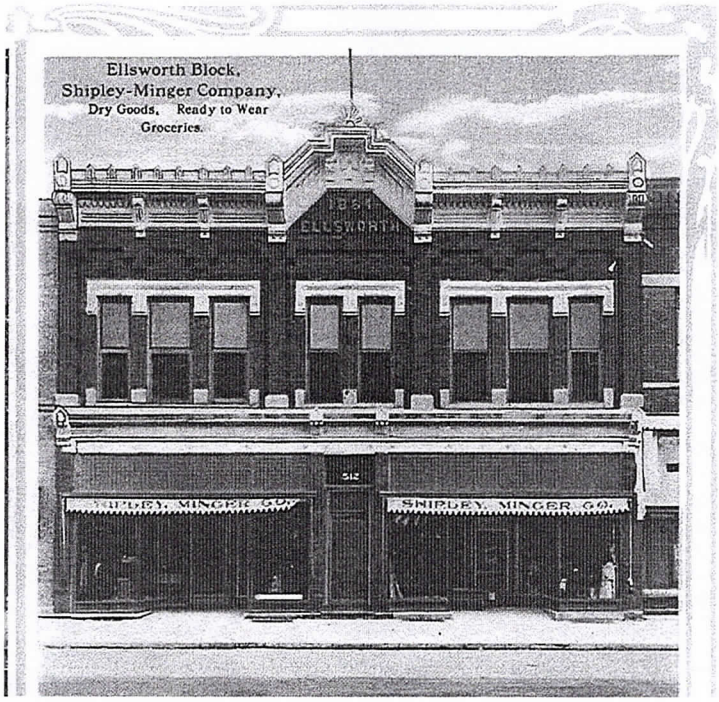


Figure 4
Ellsworth Block, 512 Washington, 1915 Photo

Figure 5
Ellsworth Block, 2009 photo





Figure 6
Ellsworth-Jones Building and Metropolitan Theater, 511 and 513-517 Washington
1915 photos

Figures 7 & 8
Ellsworth-Jones Building and Metropolitan Theater, 2009 photos
Both buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)







Figure 9
Women's Relief Corps (WRC) Hall, 710 Washington, NRHP

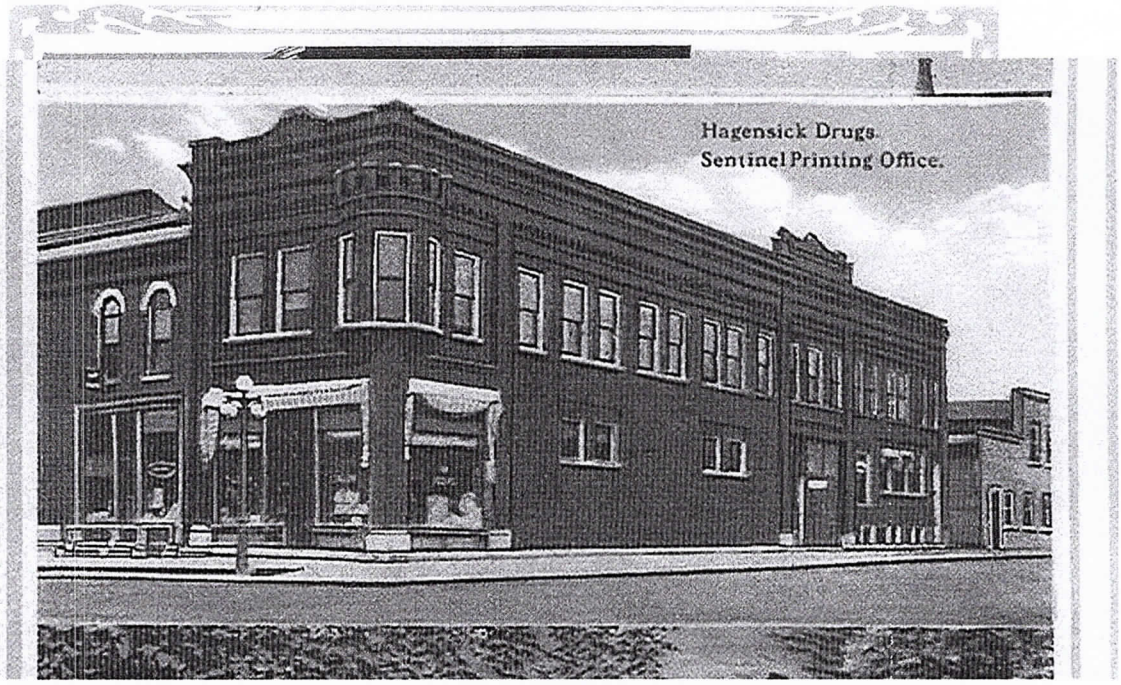


Figure 10
Iowa Falls Sentinel Building, 702 Washington, 1915 photo

Figure 11
Iowa Falls Sentinel Building, 2009 photo, NRHP



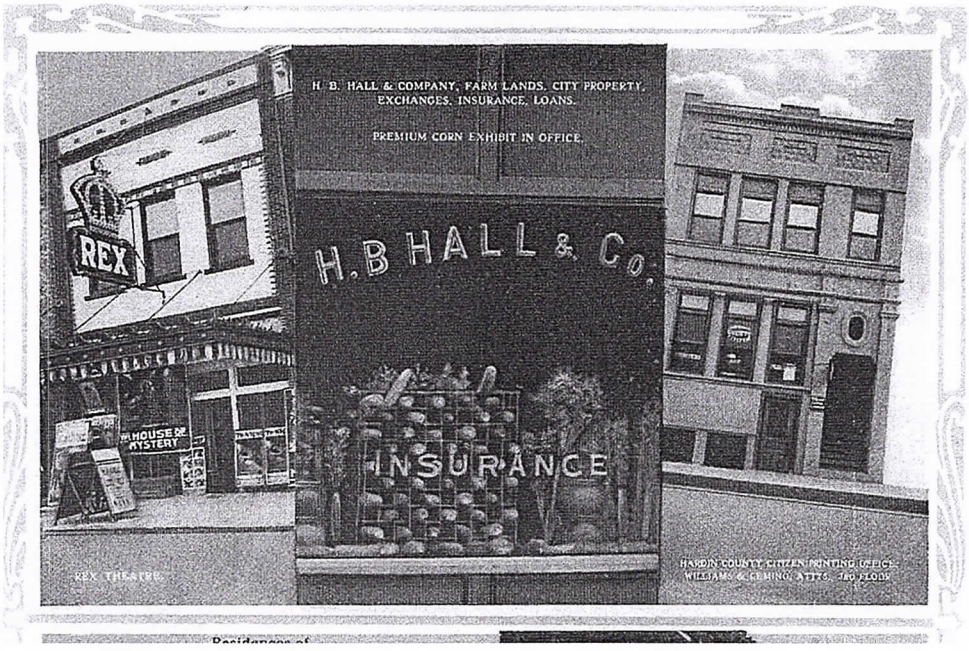


Figure 12
Hardin County Citizen Building on right, 320 Stevens, on right, 1915 photo

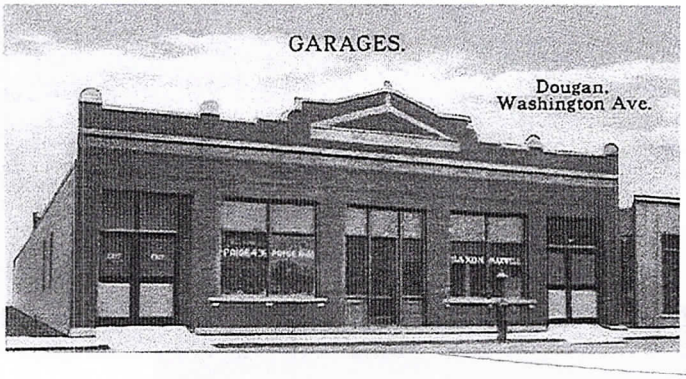
Figure 13
Hardin County Citizen Building, 2009 photo





Figure 14
Gohring Auto Garage (non-extant), 211 Stevens, 1915 photo

Figure 15
Dougan's Auto Garage, 417 Washington, 1915 photo and 2009 photo





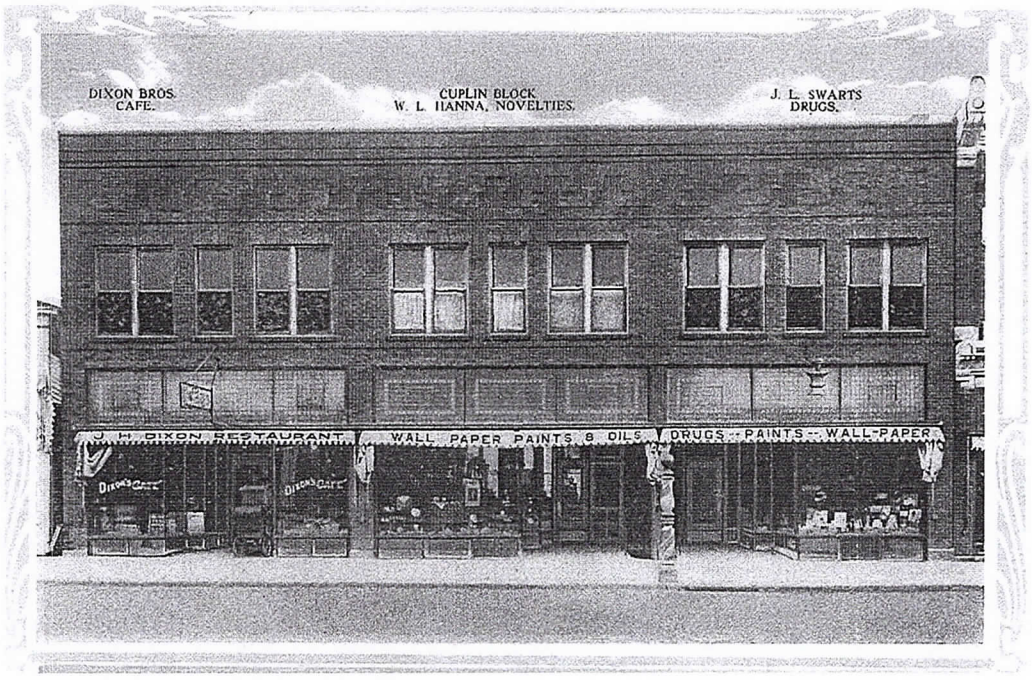


Figure 16
Cuplin Block, 514-518 Washington, 1915 photo

Figure 17
Cuplin Block, 2009 photo
Note addition of matching storefront on left



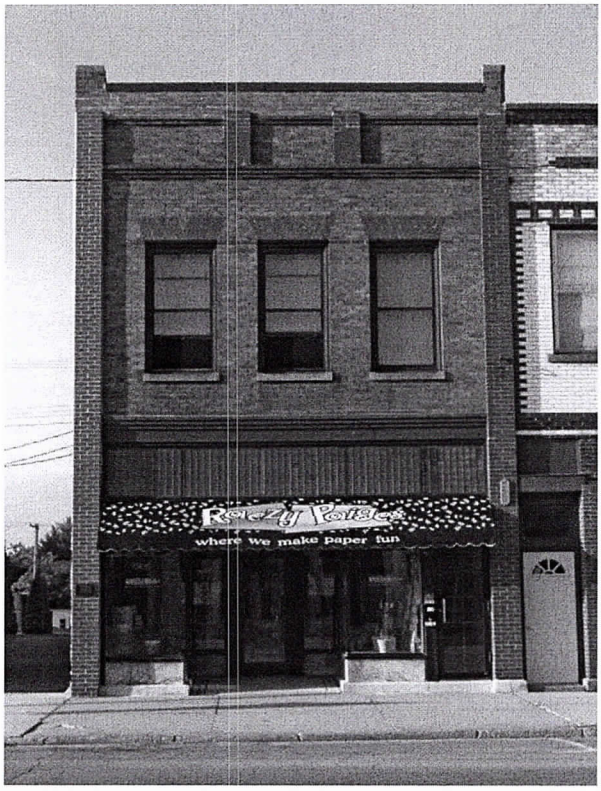


Figure 18
McClanahan Block, 613 Washington\
NRHP



Figure 19
St. Matthew's By The Bridge, 507 Railroad
NRHP

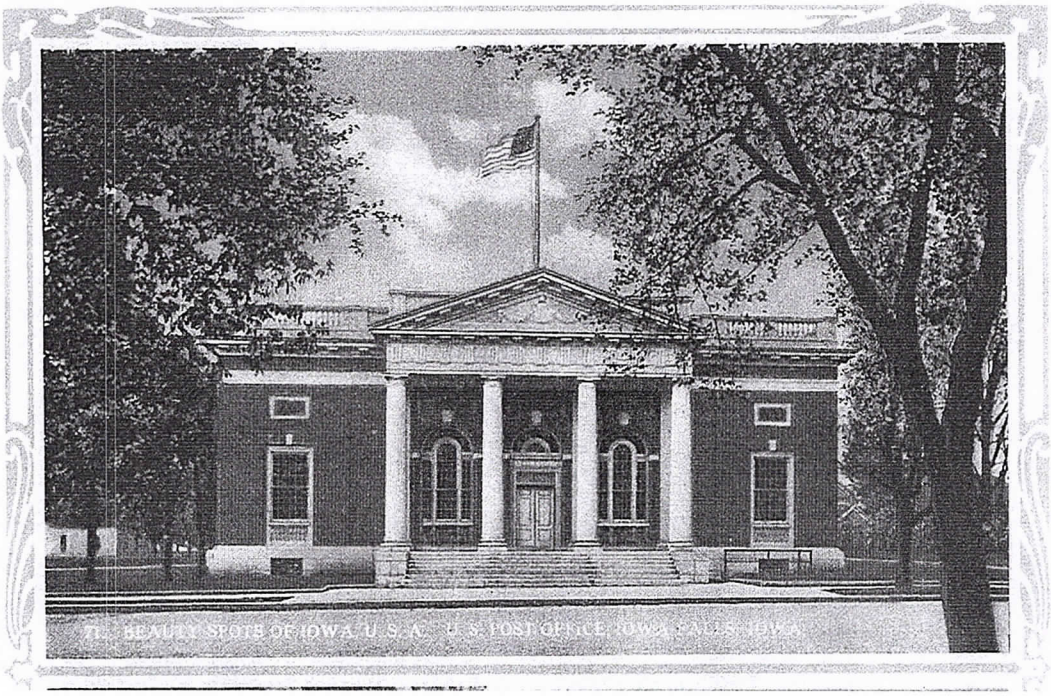


Figure 20
US Federal Building/Post Office, 401 Main Street, 1915 photo

Figure 21
US Federal Building/Post Office, 2009 photo
NRHP





Figure 22
First National Bank, 601 Washington
NRHP

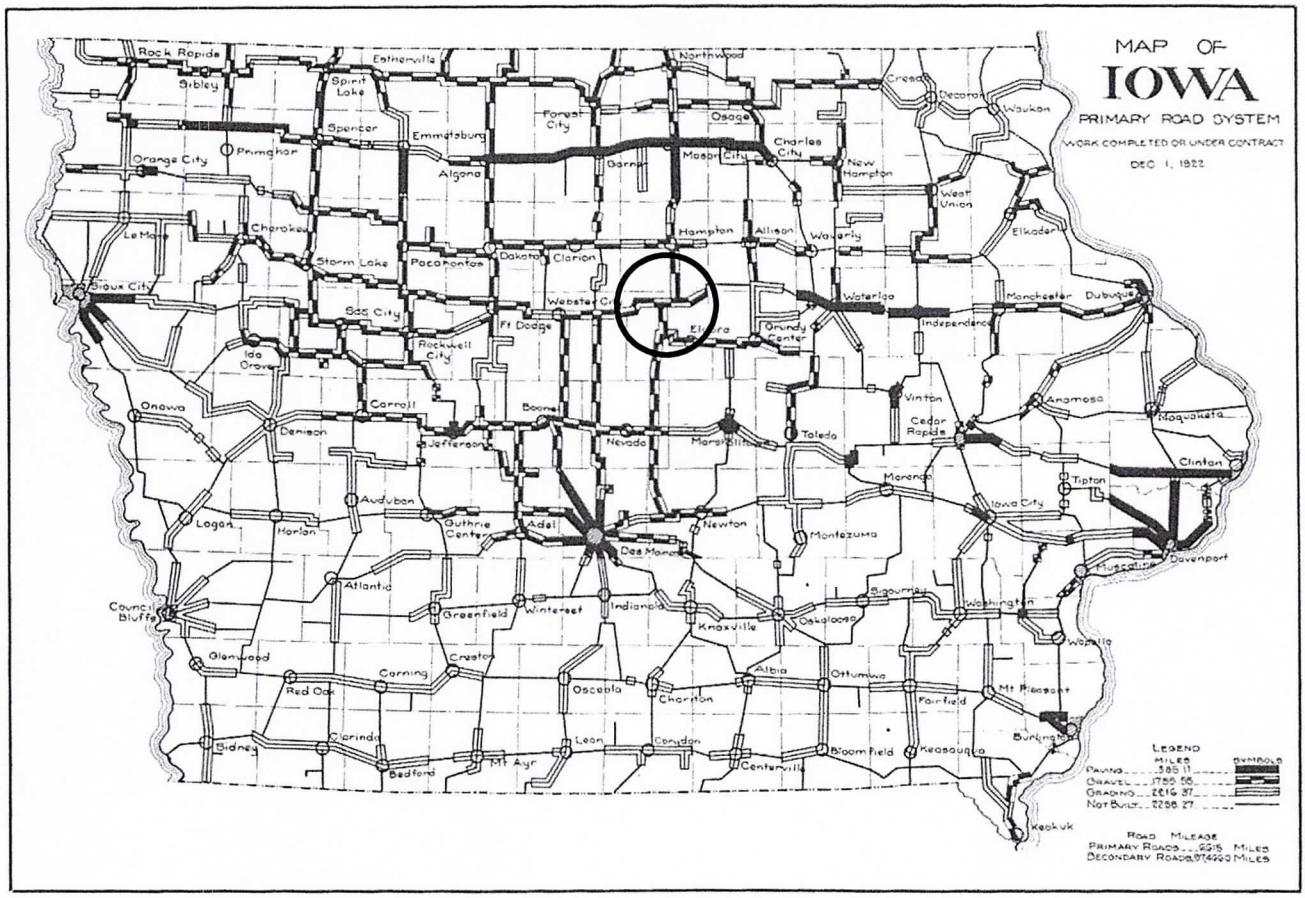


Figure 7-4
Primary Road System by surface type, 1922.
(Courtesy: *Iowa State Highway Commission Service Bulletin*, 1922)

Figure 23
Map showing location of major highways in 1922
Circle indicates location of Iowa Falls and the intersection of
US Highways 20 and 65
(Thompson, p 152)

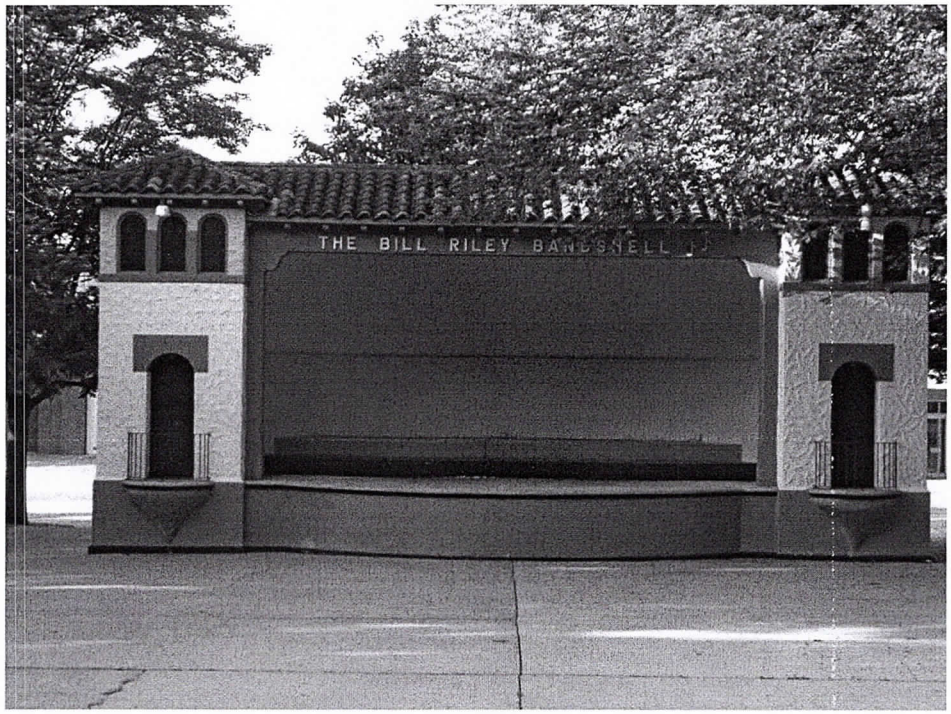


Figure 24
Estes Park Band Shell, NRHP

Figure 25
Princess Café, 607 Washington, NRHP





Figure 26
City Hall, 321 Stevens

Figure 27
Police Station at rear of City Hall





Figure 28
IOOF Building, 521 Washington

Figure 29
Strutz Building, 523 Washington



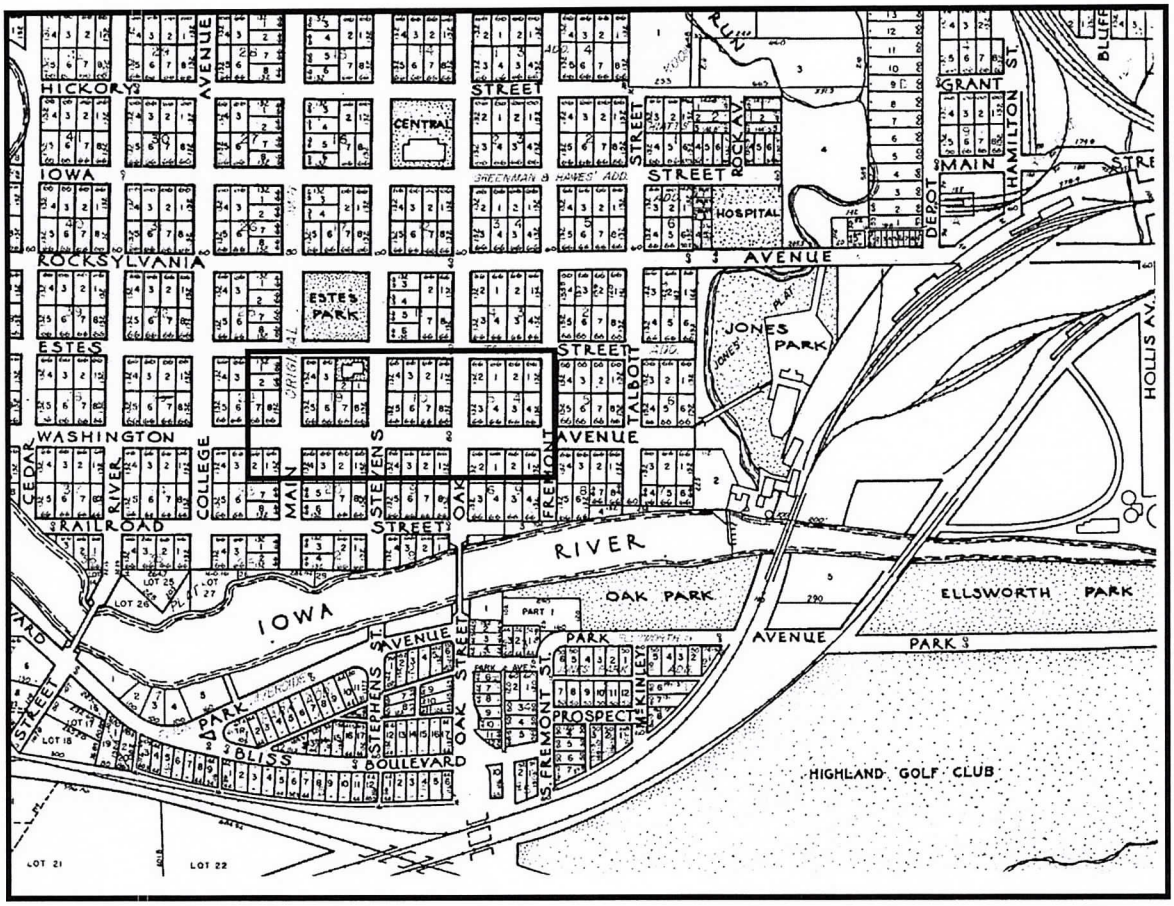


Figure 30
Plat map of Iowa Falls
Potential boundaries for a Washington Avenue Historic Commercial District

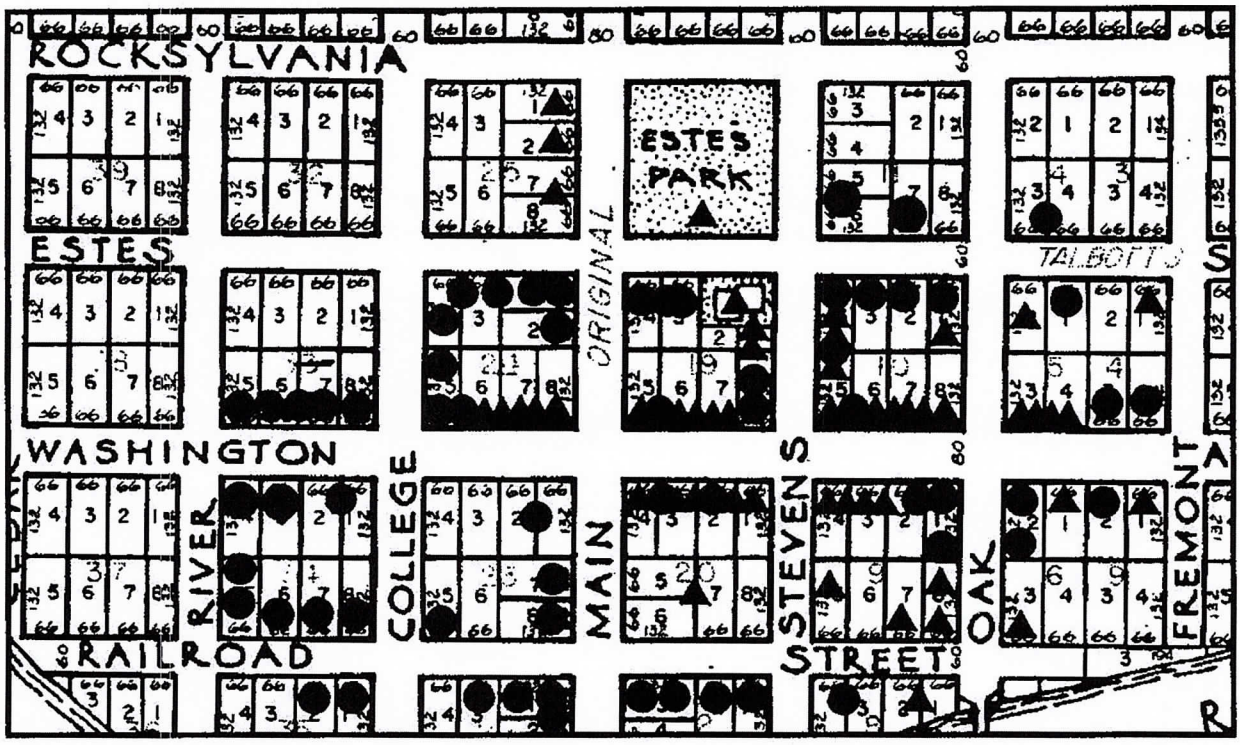


Figure 31
Plat map showing location of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

▲ Contributing

● Non-Contributing