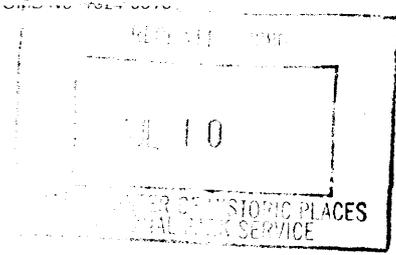


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

914



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Skykomish Historic Commercial District

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number Railroad Av (N 3<sup>rd</sup> St to 1 block W of N 6<sup>th</sup>), N. 5<sup>th</sup>, pt of Old Cascade Hwy  not for publication

city or town Town of Skykomish  vicinity

state Washington code WA county King code 033 zip code 98288

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*William B. L.*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/5/00  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

*[Signature]*

8/10/00

Skykomish Historic Commercial District  
Name of Property

King County, Washington  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
13	4	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
14	4	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

2

**6. Functions or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store, restaurant, warehs

DOMESTIC: hotel, single dwelling

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related, road-related

EDUCATION: school

GOVERNMENT: city hall, correctional facility

SOCIAL: fraternal hall

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store, restaurant, warehse

DOMESTIC: hotel, single dwelling

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related, road-related

EDUCATION: school

GOVERNMENT: city hall

SOCIAL: fraternal hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY: Craftsman,

Western False Front

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

OTHER: Through Warren Truss

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE, WOOD

walls WOOD: weatherborad, shingle; CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT SHINGLE, METAL

other STEEL

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Skykomish Historic Commercial District  
Name of Property

King County, Washington  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record# \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

TRANSPORTATION

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

GOVERNMENT

SOCIAL HISTORY

**Period of Significance**

COMMERCE: 1893-1950; TRANSPORTATION:

1893-1956; ARCHITECTURE: 1893-1936; EDUCATION:

1920-1950; GOV'T: 1923-1950; SOCIAL HIST. 1924-1950

**Significant Dates**

1893, 1904, 1939, 1956

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Skykomish Historic Commercial District  
Name of Property

King County, Washington  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 10 acres

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

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#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mimi Sheridan (adapted by Kent Sundberg, King County Office of Cultural Resources)  
organization Sheridan Consulting Group date September 15, 1999  
street & number 3630 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue West telephone (206) 270-8727  
city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98199

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

### Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name See attached list  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Skykomish Historic Commercial District  
King County, WA

## Description

The Town of Skykomish sits in the narrow bottomlands of the upper South Fork of Skykomish River in the North Cascade Mountains. The river runs through town in a westerly direction. State Route 2, one of two major cross-state highways, lies along the north side of the river. The town occupies the river's south bank, straddling the railroad tracks. Undeveloped forest land, most of which is part of the surrounding Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Fifteen miles to the east is Stevens Pass, elevation 4061 feet, the northernmost road passage through the Cascades that is kept open throughout the year.

The Skykomish Historic Commercial District runs roughly east to west along the town's main street, Railroad Avenue, which bounds the north side of the railroad tracks, and extends south of the tracks to include the last remaining fraternal building. The depot sits on the south side of the street adjoining the tracks. The remaining historic structures extend along four blocks of the north side of the street. Two buildings, the teacherage and the town hall, are just north of Railroad Avenue. Included within the district boundaries are a residence located between commercial buildings, several vacant lots, and a small park along the tracks west of the depot. Fourteen buildings within the district contribute to its historic character. The Skykomish Bridge, a contributing structure, is at the north end of the primary entry to the town, which runs perpendicular to Railroad Avenue. The Skykomish Masonic Hall is located directly south of the school, south of the railroad tracks, on the Old Cascade Highway. One modern non-contributing building occupies the northeastern corner of the district on Railroad Avenue; two others are immediately east of the Masonic Hall on the old highway.

## Contributing Buildings and Structures

### Skykomish Hotel 102 Railroad Avenue East

The cornerstone of Skykomish's commercial district, this structure is significant as a very important part of the town's early development as a commercial center and railroad hub. It is also significant as an example of commercial vernacular architecture as it was often expressed in turn-of-the-century hotels. The hotel was built by D.J. Manning in 1904 to replace a new hotel destroyed in the catastrophic fire of that year. The first hotel on the site was Schneider's Hotel, a log structure with "Everything First Class." According to one report it burned in 1902 and was replaced by the Skykomish Hotel, operated by H. Glass Sensiba; this was the structure destroyed in the 1904 fire.

The new hotel cost \$10,000, a "fine four-story hotel...plastered throughout and neatly and comfortably fitted and furnished..." An early promotional article in *The Coast* magazine shortly after the hotel was built called it "excellent accommodations for those visiting the place to enjoy the magnificent fishing and hunting." The

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Skykomish Historic Commercial District  
King County, WA

article noted that nearby there were a large billiard hall and news stand and three saloon buildings and a restaurant. It even had its own electrical plant, receiving permission in 1914 to use town water from Maloney Creek to provide power for the hotel. Manning operated the hotel until 1935, when his daughter and son-in-law Curtis and Anna Manning Brotherton took over.

The hotel has had many owners since that time. Earl Riddle purchased it in 1944 and Bill Roberts (known as Sweet Pea) in 1965. Under his ownership, during the 1960s-70s, the hotel was called Molly Gibson's; the bar featured live music and dancing and was a very popular stop for skiers going to Stevens Pass. Following Roberts' sudden death in 1979, Bill and Chris Dieffenbach owned it for ten years. It was during this period that some renovation was done, including rebuilding the porches, expanding the dining room and kitchen, and removing the asphalt shingles and cleaning the wood siding underneath. Don and Gerriann Flynn purchased the hotel in 1989 and sold it to Adam Dopps and Jane Lenzi, in March 1997. The hotel was recently acquired by Donald and Geraldine Flynn for seasonal Stevens Pass Ski area employee housing. It remains a center of town activity and a stopping place for visitors.

The hotel sits on a large lot, with a fenced back yard. A one-story gabled wing, probably dating from the 1960s-70s, extends to the north, containing the bar and a banquet room. This area once contained a rooming house (that may have been attached to the main building) and the Mannings' family house.

The hotel substantially retains its original appearance. It is three and a half stories high, with a hipped roof with hipped dormers on each side. The second and third stories have distinctive full-width balconies with square wood balusters supported by square wood posts at street level. The rear elevation also has balconies, with stairs descending from both floors to the back yard. The front balconies shade the first floor, which has entrances to the restaurant, the hotel lobby and a storefront (currently under renovation). Stairs go from the east end of the second floor balcony to the side yard. The entry doors and large-paned commercial windows with transoms appear to be original. Single-hung windows, mostly arranged in groups of three, are found on upper floors. Asbestos shakes, added in 1950, have been removed and the original horizontal wood siding restored.

The front portion of the first floor has three main spaces, each with a separate entry. The largest, encompassing the entire west side of the building, is the restaurant, with a bar and banquet room in the rear addition. The restaurant and bar have been remodeled and reconfigured several times over the years. The center doorway leads to the small hotel lobby. To the right is a store space, which was for many years Glick Henry's drug store. Known as The Palm, it featured sodas, confections, ice cream and tobacco. The storefront has since had other retail uses including, recently, a ski store. The floor contains a large hatch door leading to an underground storage area, perhaps used during Prohibition. Both the lobby and the store area are now undergoing renovation.

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Skykomish Historic Commercial District  
King County, WA

The interior of the hotel has undergone several changes, but retains much of its integrity. An open stairway with stained-fir wainscotting leads from the lobby to the second and third floors. Woodwork is stained fir throughout. The fir floors are currently not carpeted, but have been in the past. The hotel rooms are on the second and third floors, 13 on the second floor and ten on the third floor, with two bathrooms on each floor. The rooms appear to be much as they were originally, small with one window and minimal furniture. Six rooms on each of these floors have been joined to form three larger rooms. Baseboard heaters have been added. At one time the hotel was advertised as having as many as fifty rooms, which may have included either spaces on the fourth floor or rooms in the rooming house addition which once stood to the north of the building. During the 1940s-50s, the top floor was reportedly used as a bunkhouse, where men could rent a bed for \$2.00 a night. It is now a three-bedroom apartment used by the owners.

Maloney's General Store (now Homestead Vintage Stove Co.) 104 Railroad Avenue West  
Sitting opposite the hotel, the general store anchors the west side of Railroad Avenue. It is one of the few commercial buildings to survive the 1904 fire. John Maloney, the town founder, opened the store in 1893, just as the main Great Northern line was completed. It was the first commercial building in Skykomish and also housed the post office for many years. The store retains its integrity of setting and materials, and is still in use as a store. It is a King County Historic Landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

A general store was the heart of a small town like Skykomish. Maloney's provided all the necessities of daily living for the growing town, selling everything from groceries and meats to ladies wear, hardware and furniture. It advertised itself as a "General Merchandise" store offering "All kinds of Fancy and Staple Groceries, Dry Goods, Notions, Clothing, Boot, Shoes, etc."

The original store was a 30x60 foot wood-frame structure with a false front disguising its gabled roof. By 1904 a single-story shed addition with false fronts had been added to each side for expanded storage space. These later accommodated various stores, including a meat market. The commercial style large-paned windows appear to be original.

The Maloney store underwent extensive restoration between 1992 and 1995. The original fir siding, window trim and sills and the post and beam foundation were all repaired to the extent possible or replaced if necessary. This restoration reversed changes from a 1948 modernization which had removed the false front, covered the fir siding with composition brick siding, and replaced the wood shed roof over the sidewalk with a cloth awning.

The interior still has its historic appearance with high ceilings and an open floor plan. The floor is tongue in groove fir and the ceiling is covered with bead board. Remaining interior fixtures include a rolling ladder and

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

track used to reach high shelves and the meat market's wood meat locker door. The interior was also repaired and restored in the early 1990s.

The Maloney family home was located on the lot to the north and connected to the store by two enclosed walkways; the home and walkways were demolished after John Maloney's death in 1940. At this time the rear wall was extended eight feet,, enclosing the rear staircase.

A vacant lot sits to the west of the store, with a storage shed moved there two years ago.

### The Olympia (now Whistling Post Tavern) 116 Railroad Avenue East

This building is significant as one of the original buildings erected immediately after the 1904 fire. It is also the only surviving tavern from the era when taverns and similar establishments were a vital part of town life. The original Olympia saloon was opened in 1897 by Patrick McEvoy, the Great Northern engineer who had run the first passenger train over the newly-constructed switchbacks. This burned in the 1904 fire and was replaced in 1905 by the Maple Leaf. It became a "confectionery" when Washington adopted Prohibition. With the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, it once again reverted to being a tavern and pool hall. The term "Whistling Post" was used during the Depression, because railroad workers said that hard times were likely to make Skykomish so small that it would be only a "whistling post," not a regular stop on the line. This structure survived the 1970 fire that destroyed the two adjacent buildings also owned by the tavern's owner, Bryan Thompson.

It is one and one-half stories, its front gabled roof masked by a Western-style false front.

A two-story residential addition has been constructed on the rear, with a standing seam metal roof. The entry door is inset and surrounded with vertical siding and false brick. Windows appear to be original, including commercial windows on the front (south) elevation and large paned windows with no muntins elsewhere around the building.

To the west of the Whistling Post are three vacant lots that originally contained two saloons and a general store, all important to the historic fabric and character of the commercial district. These were destroyed in a fire in 1970, and nothing has been rebuilt on the site.

### Hatley Hotel (now Cascadia Hotel) 210 Railroad Avenue East

This site was originally Martin's Boarding House, which was replaced by the Hatley Hotel in 1922. The building was further remodeled in 1938. It has had numerous owners over the years, including C.H. Hill (1938), Louise Schwartz (1945), Ernie Wagner (late 1940s-50s), Luther Profitt, the Gillmeres (1969) and Keith McDougall. It has recently been purchased by Philip Holmes of Snohomish.

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

The two-story hotel has a hip roof with a metal shed roof with square support posts extending over the sidewalk along the front of the property. The west elevation has a shed roof wing with lattice screening. First floor windows have been replaced with aluminum. It is currently under renovation and new windows have been installed. A brick sidewalk runs in front of the building. Siding is primarily horizontal wood.

The building has had numerous changes over the years, but now looks somewhat similar to its probable original appearance. It originally had three stories, but the upper two were destroyed by fire in the 1930s. The second floor was repaired and in use by 1940, with a flat roof. In 1948-49 the hip roof was restored. The rooms were also renovated at that time and more bathrooms added. Shakes were installed but have now been removed. The building was extensively remodeled again in 1986, when the restaurant and restrooms were enlarged.

### Great Northern Depot (now Skykomish Depot) 201 Railroad Avenue East

The depot is significant as the reflection of the railroad's fundamental role in the social and economic fabric of Skykomish and the functional and symbolic hub of the railroad, the primary industry that built the town and around which the town is sited. It is a designated King County landmark and is listed on the National Register. It is one of the town's oldest buildings, having been built in 1894, and is the only surviving original structure in the Skykomish rail yard. The depot was constructed from the Great Northern's standard plans for rural train stations in the 1890s and is one of the last surviving examples of this type. Most other examples have been demolished, moved away from the right of way, or significantly altered and put to new uses. Its relocation across the tracks in 1922 serves to enhance its integral association with the town and the operation and development of the rail yard over time. Overall the depot is in fair condition and retains its exterior historical integrity, providing a strong element to Skykomish's main street. It is still used by the railroad, primarily for storage.

Until 1922 the depot stood on the south side of the railroad tracks at the foot of Fifth Street, facing Maloney's Store. At that time it was about half of its present size, and the exterior cladding and window arrangement differed from what is seen today. In 1922 the building was relocated to the north side of the tracks, reoriented to face the tracks and the rail yard on the south, and expanded by the addition of a large freight room on the east end. To the west is a small green space that has been used as a park since the 1920s. It contains two picnic tables, two large trees and several shrubs. Owned by the railroad, it is maintained by the Skykomish Lions Club.

The depot is a simple one-story rectangular frame structure with a three-sided bay window on the track side. The wooden platform has been replaced by an apron of blacktop and gravel around the east and south sides of the building. The roof is a broad, medium-pitched gable with generous overhangs. The exterior walls are clad with narrow lapped weatherboard siding, which probably dates from the 1922 remodeling. The original shiplap

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

siding remains around the base of the building. On the north side, facing Railroad Avenue, the shiplap has been covered with plywood. The roof was sheathed with composition shingles in 1995. Windows are primarily large six-over-six light wooden sash and, in the freight room, high rectangular windows with fixed multiple panes. The simple three-sided bay window with three, four-over-four light sash once provided the station operator with a clear view of the tracks. A door at either side provides access to the waiting room. Three freight doors, two on the track side and another along Railroad Avenue, open into the freight room. Those on the track side appear to be of original design with transom windows above.

The original entrance hall and ticket office remain much as they were, with fir flooring, tongue-and-groove partitions and ticket window detailing intact; a dropped acoustical ceiling has been added. The passenger waiting room has been divided into various office and storage spaces.

### Skykomish Town Hall/Library/Jail (now Town Hall) 115 N. Fourth Street

Local residents report that the town hall was built of material salvaged from demolished railroad buildings. Others have said that the building was moved from track-side intact about 1934. In any case, concrete block jail and restrooms were added. The interior consists primarily of one large room, housing town offices and sheriff/emergency service personnel. Until 1994 it also housed the library; Skykomish was the first King County community to contract with the county for library services, in 1945. The library has since moved to another structure across the tracks.

The town hall is a wood-frame Craftsman-style structure, with a side gable roof that substantially retains its appearance as shown in the 1940 King County Tax Assessor photo. It is clad in horizontal wood siding and sits on concrete foundation. Roof brackets are under the eaves on the north and south sides. The entry is in the center with a gabled porch extending over concrete steps; the gable has decorative pattern of vertical siding. Metal railings and a wheel chair ramp on the south side have been added. Windows throughout are single-hung six-over-six sash.

### Patrick McEvoy House (now Moore Rental House) 200 Railroad Avenue East

This private residence is one of the town's older homes, built only a few years after the town's founding. It was originally owned by Patrick (Paddy) McEvoy, who opened the Olympia Tavern in 1897. McEvoy was a prominent Skykomish citizen, a former Great Northern engineer who ran the first passenger train over the switchbacks. This is the only remaining residence actually in the historic commercial district, occupying the key corner at Railroad Avenue East and 4th Street.

It is a simple residential vernacular structure with a gabled roof and horizontal wood siding. Many of the windows appear to be original; some are fixed windows with six lights; others are double hung windows with

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

two lights in each section, divided horizontally. Gabled hoods with Craftsman-style detailing shelter two entry doors, one on each street facade. A plain door is located next to the garage door. The home was remodeled in 1946. The original full-width porch was removed. Additions have been built to the north, including a living area and a garage, and to the east. The main entrance appears to have been moved from Railroad Avenue to the 4th Street side. The site is marked by two large maple trees.

### Manual Training Building (now Town Maintenance Building) 110 Railroad Avenue West

This structure was built in the early 1920s as the manual training building for the high school and was located farther west, near the old school building. After the new school was built in 1936, the building was moved to its present location and was converted to commercial uses, including a meat market. The Town purchased it and converted it to a firehouse about 1954. A new fire station has been built and the Town now uses this building for maintenance department offices and storage.

The two-story wood-frame Craftsman-style structure has a metal front-gable roof with deep eaves, exposed rafters and prominent brackets. It is clad in horizontal wood siding with wide cornerboards. It substantially retains its earlier appearance, although the original gabled entry was replaced by two garage doors for fire trucks. In the rear, exit stairs were added from the second floor to the back yard. Shed roof enclosed entries are on both sides of the front facade. Prominent roof brackets are on the north and south sides. A diamond-shaped window accents the tall front gable, and banks of double-hung one-over-one line the west elevation.

### Maloney's Warehouse Railroad Avenue East

This structure, originally a warehouse for Maloney's store, was built in 1906 on the other side of Sixth Street, parallel to the tracks. It was moved to its present location about 1920 and was later used as a movie theater. It was remodeled in 1936 and was purchased by Thelma Maloney Leavens two years later. It is now used for storage and is derelict condition; the present owner is the Ward Trust.

The building is a simple vernacular building with a steeply-pitched front gable roof sheathed in metal. The building is clad in horizontal wood siding. A gabled extension on the front facade, visible in the 1940 King County Tax Assessor photograph, has been removed and the opening boarded up. Two large freight doors on the east and west sides, a large window in the rear gable, and several small windows are also boarded up.

### Skykomish School 208 Railroad Avenue West

The school, a designated City and County Landmark, forms the western end of the historic district. It is bordered by the Skykomish River on the north and the railroad tracks on the south. The structure, designed by architect William Mallis, was built in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration after the district outgrew the original 1902 school. It is still in use as both an elementary and high school, and remains the center of

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

community activities. The Skykomish Mill provided the wood used to build the school, and a surplus locomotive boiler was--and still is-- used for heat.

The school is one of only seven schools built by the WPA in Washington, and typifies the construction styles and techniques of 1930s public construction. It was a very modern school for a small town, with specialized rooms such as a science lab. The facility was designed for community use as well as school purposes, with a large gymnasium/auditorium. The three story flat roofed concrete structure has streamline Moderne detailing and restrained art deco ornament. Because it was designed to house all grades it has two formal entries--one on Railroad Avenue for the grade school and one facing Sixth Street for the high school. A projecting bay rising the full height of the building marks each of the almost identical entries. The grade school entry on Railroad Avenue is marked by the words GRADE SCHOOL in cast concrete over the entry at the western section of the facade. The high school entry is centered on the east, or Sixth Street, facade. The north side has another entry.

Windows and bays throughout the building reflect the various interior uses of stairways, hallways, large and small classrooms and specialized areas such as vocational training and the gymnasium. The interior retains its historic integrity, with varnished wood wainscoting and window and door surrounds, some original light fixtures, original multi-paned windows, and surviving unique details such as wooden ventilation ducting in the science lab.

### Teacherage Sixth Street

This structure, with the School a designated King County Landmark, was built by the school district to house single female teachers, who had few options in a small, isolated town like Skykomish. It is located just north of the school on Sixth Street, between the school and the river. Its scale and Craftsman detailing relate more closely to the surrounding residential properties than to the school building itself. It retains excellent integrity of setting, design and materials, and is currently used as the superintendent's residence.

The four-bedroom home is two stories with a cross-gable roof, narrow clapboard siding and a concrete foundation. It remains in its original condition, except that the rear porch has been enclosed and the wood shingle roof has been replaced by metal roofing. Windows are typical of the Craftsman style, with six-over-six, six-over-one, and four-over-one double-hung sash. Small two-over-two windows light the bedroom closets. The interior also retains its historic integrity, with stained baseboards and wood trim, built-in cabinets and historic linoleum.

### Skykomish Bridge

The steel Warren through-truss bridge crossing the South Fork of the Skykomish River was constructed in 1939 to connect the newly built cross-Cascades highway to the town of Skykomish. Reinforced concrete footings

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

and piers support a riveted steel superstructure. The bridge has a reinforced concrete deck with a 4-foot sidewalk on the west, separated from vehicular traffic lanes. Subdued Moderne-styled detailing is present in the reinforced concrete approach railings.

#### Skykomish Masonic Hall 108 Old Cascade Highway

The two-story gable-front wood-frame Masonic Hall, built in 1924, is located on the south side of the railroad tracks along the Old Cascade Highway (formerly the primary road entry to the town). The main entry faces south toward the street, rather than the tracks. The structure has good integrity, retaining its original paired one-over-one windows and shiplap siding with vertical corner trim. Rafter ends are exposed at the eaves, and the front and rear gable eaves are supported by knee brackets. Alterations include a 1.5 story rear addition, and the enclosure of the full-width front entry hip-roofed entry porch. The one-over-one window on the front porch may have originally been on the front facade. An historic metal fire escape balcony is attached to the east elevation outside a five-panel door. A separate woodshed is situated immediately north of, and aligned with, the Hall. Constructed at about the same time as the Hall, it is a simple utilitarian one-story gable-roofed building clad with shiplap siding and vertical corner trim, measuring approximately 10 by 12 feet. The shed has exposed rafter tails, no windows, and is entered through the front gable entry. Both buildings are now roofed with enameled metal roofing.

#### Non-Contributing Buildings

#### Superintendent's House Railroad Avenue W. and Sixth Street

This small house, is a reconstruction of one of the town's oldest dwellings, used by the school district for many years as the house of the superintendent. The original building sat on the other side of Sixth Street and was moved when the 1936 school was erected. The building is owned by the school district and was reconstructed in 1999 (in its 1890 form) for use as a community center. The structure has a pyramidal roof with a pyramidal bay at the front entry. A wide shed roof extends over the concrete stoop. The foundation is concrete. Windows are predominantly double-hung, two-over-two sash. The building is clad in rustic drop siding.

#### GTE Building 103 North Third Street

This non-contributing structure is a concrete-block telephone equipment building built circa 1970 that sits on Railroad Avenue across from the depot. It is included in the district boundaries because the rest of the block is important historically. A meat market once stood on the site.

#### Apartment Building Old North Cascade Highway

This non-contributing four-unit apartment building was constructed in 1927 but has been substantially altered since that time. It is included in the district because it adjoins the Skykomish Masonic Hall.

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King County Library 100 5<sup>th</sup> Street N

This non-contributing building was constructed in 1958. It is included in the district because of its proximity to the Skykomish Masonic Hall.

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### Statement of Significance

The Skykomish Commercial District is significant for its association with the development of the Town of Skykomish, the major settlement in the Upper Skykomish River Valley. It lies on SR 2, one of the major routes across the Cascades, and is the last town before the summit at Stevens Pass. On a broader scale, the district is significantly associated with the development of the Great Northern Railroad, a major factor in the economic growth of the Pacific Northwest, particularly King and Snohomish counties and the city of Seattle.

As a group, the buildings are significant as examples of commercial vernacular architecture built in King County communities in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. The district also includes the only extant example in King and Snohomish counties (and one of the few remaining in the state) of a wood-frame depot from the earliest days of the Great Northern Railroad. The 1936 school is an excellent example of a WPA-Moderne public building, one of only seven schools built by the WPA in Washington. The majority of the buildings retain integrity of setting, design and materials. Most remain in their original use.

The Town of Skykomish was surveyed in 1995 by King County Landmarks and Heritage Program staff in collaboration with the Skykomish Historical Society. An overview history of the community was prepared in 1996 by Florence Lentz, historical resources consultant. Five buildings in the district have already been designated as King County Landmarks: Maloney's General Store, the Great Northern Depot, the Skykomish School and Teacherage, and the Skykomish Masonic Hall. Information in this district nomination is drawn primarily from these documents, supplemented by additional information provided by property owners.

The Skykomish Historic Commercial District runs primarily along the town's main street, Railroad Avenue, which parallels the north side of the railroad tracks. The depot sits on the south side of the street adjoining the tracks. The remaining historic buildings extend along four blocks on the north side of the street or lie south, across the tracks. Two buildings, the teacherage and the town hall, are just off of the main street. Most properties are privately owned and are in active use. One private residence located between commercial buildings is included. The Town of Skykomish owns two buildings and three belong to School District No. 404. Several vacant lots are included in the district, marking spaces where buildings were destroyed by fire. Also included is a small park adjoining the depot, owned by the railroad but used and maintained by the public.

The thirteen contributing buildings and one contributing structure within the historic district document four periods of town history. Maloney's General Store (1893), the depot (1894), the Superintendent's House (1895) and the Patrick McEvoy house (1897) come from the earliest days of the town's founding, when it first developed with the railroad's coming over the Cascades. The Skykomish Hotel (1904), the Whistling Post Tavern (1905), and Maloney's Warehouse (1906) were all erected after the disastrous fire that destroyed most of

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

the commercial district in 1904. The Cascadia Hotel (1922), the Teacherage (1920), Town Hall (1926), the school's Manual Training building (1923), and the Masonic Hall (1924) and woodshed were all built during the 1920s, the period of the town's greatest activity due to railroad expansion.

During the Depression years, Skykomish, like the rest of the country, faced hard times and the local mill was closed down. The school (1936) and bridge (1939) typify the Federal assistance that enabled small towns to maintain their infrastructure and continue to meet vital needs such as educating their youth and to update regional transportation systems. It is also typifies the national tendency to consolidate school districts to save money, an action that further substantiated Skykomish's role as the commercial hub of the Upper Valley.

Several buildings were moved during their period of significance: the Superintendent's Residence, the Manual Training Building, Maloney's Warehouse and the depot. These moves were due to the 1920s expansion of the railroad and the construction of the new school in 1936. Since the relocations occurred during the period of significance and the new settings and uses were similar to the original, they did not affect the historic integrity of the structures.

### Summary History of Skykomish

The town is at the edge of the heavy Cascade snows, which greatly influenced its role as a railroad staging area. Forests and mineral deposits are plentiful in the surrounding Cascade foothills and mountains, and many species of fish and game flourish.

Skykomish--meaning "inland people"--takes its name from the Skykomish Tribe who lived along the river from Monroe east to Index and beyond. In the winter they lived in permanent villages down stream; in other seasons they traveled widely gathering fish, games, berries and other plant materials. No permanent settlements or fisheries are recorded near Skykomish, but the area was rich in berries and game and was almost certainly used as for gathering, fishing and hunting. In 1855, the Skykomish Tribe, its numbers severely reduced by illness, was assigned to the Tulalip Reservation near Everett. However, as late as the turn of the century as many as 240 people lived at the native village near Gold Bar.

Permanent settlement did not occur in Skykomish until 1893, with the construction of the Great Northern Railroad across the Cascades. The railroad continued to shape the town, both physically and economically, for nearly sixty years. The timber industry was the town's second important economic mainstay, flourishing from the 1890s into the 1940s. Limited mining for a variety of minerals and rocks was also an active industry during much of this period, primarily around the turn of the century. From the earliest days hunting and fishing

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attracted many visitors to Skykomish's spectacular wilderness setting and comfortable hotels; tourism increased after the cross-mountain highway opened in 1925.

The Great Northern Railroad, planning a transcontinental route to Seattle, began searching for a trans-Cascades crossing in 1887. The competing Northern Pacific Railroad, whose terminus was at Tacoma, was already constructing its route well to the south at Stampede Pass. Engineer John F. Stevens was sent to locate the best northern route; he identified a stream on the east side of the Cascades, Nason Creek, a tributary of the Wenatchee River. Further investigation showed that its headwaters did provide access across the summit to the Skykomish River, forming the shortest route from the Wenatchee River to Puget Sound. Construction began in 1891 with laborers, many of Italian, Greek or Japanese descent, laying rails from both Wenatchee and Everett. Rain, snow and the mountainous terrain meant it was slow work, but the rails were finally joined in January 1893, with service beginning the following summer.

The steepness of the route meant that eight switchbacks had to be built, with the trains zigzagging up the sheer mountainside, one engine at the front and another at the rear. Up to 36 hours could be required to traverse the 12-mile section in icy conditions. Accordingly, in 1897, the railroad began construction of a tunnel. The tunnel was 2.63 miles long, so long that venting the smoke was a serious concern. In 1909 the railroad electrified the tunnel, using a direct current system powered by a hydroelectric plant at Tumwater Canyon on the east side of the pass.

The town was founded by John Maloney, a member of John Stevens' survey team. In 1890, knowing the route the train would follow, he staked a claim on the South Fork of the Skykomish River. A siding was constructed and when the route was completed in 1893 he erected a general store and post office. Six years later, in 1899, he and his wife Louisa filed the Plat of the Town of Skykomish; they made four additional plats over the next three decades. The nominated historic commercial district sits in the oldest part of town, paralleling the tracks just south of the river.

By the turn of the century, Skykomish was a thriving village with a population of 150, a hotel, a school, a general store, a restaurant, a cigar and gents' furnishings store, a barber and a baker. Its second industry was thriving as well, since a shingle mill and a saw and planing mill flourished. Mining and logging occurred in the surrounding forests.

The most important event in the town's early history occurred on April 11, 1904, when the commercial center, including the hotel, several saloons and a number of dwellings were destroyed by fire. Maloney's store, west of Fifth Street survived. However, the town rebounded quickly. Within a year after the fire, the new Skykomish Hotel opened, along with a billiard hall, a news stand, three saloons and at least one restaurant. Maloney's

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business also expanded considerably, building a warehouse across the street to provide more retail space in the main structure.

Businesses came and went, most in the Railroad Avenue commercial district. Some of the major ones were Fournier's barber shop, Hatley's Hotel (called the Cascadia by 1930), Glick Henry's Palm Drugs, G.T, Sugahara's Overhill Cafe, dry goods, billiards and pool halls (saloons before Prohibition), shoe repair, groceries and general merchandise. In 1925 movies were being shown in a building just east of the Skykomish Hotel; by 1930 that space had become a pool and card room and movies were being shown in the old Maloney's warehouse. The warehouse had been across the street by 1940. The Masonic Lodge, founded in the early 1920s by railroad employees, included many energetic and prominent citizens and was a focus for social activity in the community. One of three lodge buildings in the mid-1920s, the Masonic Hall is the only surviving fraternal building in Skykomish.

More railroad activity, as well as the continued growth of the lumber industry, brought increased prosperity during the first decades of the new century. But an even more serious disaster was the main impetus for railroad construction. The railroad tunnel had proved insufficient in fighting the snows of the Cascades. Even with rotary plows, trains were delayed for hours, subject to severe avalanche hazard. In March 1910 an avalanche struck two waiting trains near Wellington, killing nearly 100 people. In the decade after this disaster, the railroad undertook almost constant improvements, constructing more snowsheds and tunnels.

Construction camps grew up all along the line, providing hotels and boarding houses, modest family dwellings, stores, saloons and other necessities and entertainments. There were once nine such settlements between the summit and Index; all except Skykomish have virtually disappeared.

Skykomish was important to the railroad not only as a construction center but as a division point, where trains were made up and helper engines were attached to the trains for the uphill climb to the summit. It was at the Skykomish yard that engines were repaired, maintained and supplied with coal, water and oil. A major factor in the town's physical development was the railroad's expansion in the 1920s. New tracks were laid and the depot was relocated to the other side of the tracks to its present location, and reoriented to face the tracks on the south side rather than the north. A sixteen-stall roundhouse replaced an older smaller structure. A large new turntable was constructed, as well as new water tanks, an oil tank, a pump house, tool houses and other small support structures. About 1926 the railroad erected a large concrete substation south of the tracks to provide for the electrification of the line.

Also in 1926 construction began on the largest improvement yet, an eight-mile tunnel and electrification of the entire route between Skykomish and Wenatchee. More than 1700 men worked around the clock for three years.

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When completed in 1929 it eliminated six miles of snowsheds and was the longest tunnel in the western hemisphere. Its opening was heralded across the country, with a speech by President Hoover and a banquet for 600 at the construction camp at Scenic.

It was during the 1920s that Skykomish peaked in population and activity. The town boomed with construction workers, the mill operated at full capacity, the cross-state highway was completed and businesses and public facilities expanded. Population may have reached nearly a thousand. Numerous trains passed each day, including passenger trains, a local freight, mail trains, the Empire Builder to and from Chicago, and high-speed trains carrying precious raw silk from the Seattle docks to Eastern factories.

Change quickened during and after World War II, as transportation technology developed. The roundhouse burned in the 1940s and was never rebuilt. Steam locomotives, displaced by diesel, disappeared in 1953. The diesel engines no longer needed to be replaced by electrics through the tunnel, so the electric helper engines were eliminated in 1956. By the late 1950s passenger service to Skykomish ended, although local men continued as operators to add diesel helper engines. In 1970 the Great Northern merged with the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. By 1992 the substation and most of the physical reminders of the yard had been removed. Although many freight trains still pass through daily, the depot and the section foreman's house are the only tangible reminders of the industry that was the lifeblood of the community for more than sixty years.

Skykomish was not entirely dependent on the railroad. Logging had begun in the Skykomish Valley about 1860, with several small mills being established over the years. John Maloney erected a shingle mill in town in the late 1890s, which operated until the mid-1920s. He also helped organize the Skykomish Lumber Company in 1898. This became a sizeable concern, employing about 100 men at its peak. It was acquired by Bloedel Donovan in 1917, and boomed with war and railroad contracts. When the mill burned in 1928, it was quickly rebuilt. Although it was closed down during the mid-1930s Depression years, it operated again from about 1936 through World War II. The mill was sold in 1946 to Empire Millwork Corporation, who closed the large sawmill and ran a much smaller operation.

Highway development was also important to Skykomish's growth. As automobiles became more popular in the early 20th century, motorists wanted to follow the railroad across Cascade passes. The Scenic Highway Association was founded in 1912 to solicit funds for a cross-Cascades route using the abandoned railroad switchbacks. The road was partially completed by 1917, but World War I prevented their reaching the summit. Federal funds became available in 1921 and the "highway," little more than a narrow, winding dirt road, was opened with great fanfare in 1925. During the Depression years labor provided by the Works Progress Administration and the U.S. Forest Service brought continued improvements. By 1930 the road had been

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### Skykomish Historic Commercial District King County, WA

graveled through Skykomish; by 1936 it was partially paved. The original route through Skykomish hugged the south side of the valley, south of the river. In the late 1930s the highway was realigned to its current location north of the river. The existing bridge connecting the highway with North 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue was erected in 1939.

Businesses catering to motorists moved away from the Old Cascade Highway and Railroad Avenue to the new road. A gas station, a small deli/store and a motel--all modern buildings-- are the only parts of Skykomish easily visible to most drivers, who do not cross over the Fifth Street bridge to Railroad Avenue. The Old Cascade Highway still exists as a local road on the south side of town, but virtually no signs of its historic motorist-related businesses survive.

The railroad shifted to diesel engines, the timber market moved elsewhere and mining proved uneconomical. The population and businesses declined accordingly. During the 1930s population fell to 400-600 and continued to decline, stabilizing at about 200 in the 1960s-70s. However, increased use of the Stevens Pass Ski Area, more tourist attractions along SR 2, and a larger number of people with mountain retreats have made Skykomish an important part of a larger recreational area for the ever-expanding and increasingly mobile population of Puget Sound.

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### Bibliography

King County Assessor's Property Record Cards, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch

Historical Overview of the Town of Skykomish, Prehistory to 1955 (Florence Lentz, 8/96)

#### King County Historic Sites Survey

- No. 0536: Railroad Avenue, Skykomish (1978);
- No. 0541: Teacherage, Skykomish (1978);
- No. 1055: Maloney's General Store, Skykomish (1978);
- No. 1057: Great Northern Depot, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1056: Skykomish School, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1058: Skykomish Masonic Hall (1995);
- No. 1066: Superintendent's House, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1067: Manual Training Building, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1068: Maloney's Warehouse, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1072: Skykomish Bridge, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1074: Skykomish Hotel, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1075: The Olympia, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1077: Skykomish Town Hall, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1082: Patrick McEvoy House, Skykomish (1995);
- No. 1083: Hatley Hotel, Skykomish (1995);

King County Landmark Registration Forms: Great Northern Depot (1/25/96), Skykomish Masonic Hall (10/98), Skykomish School and Teacherage (3/27/95) and Maloney's General Store (3/20/94) and National Register nominations (4/14/97 and 8/29/97 for Maloney's Store and Great Northern Depot respectively)

#### Other sources:

Anderson, Eve. *Rails Across the Cascades*. Wenatchee, Washington: World Publishing Co., 1952.

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**UTM References**  
(additional UTM References)

5	10	6	2 2	9 1 5	5 2	8 5	1 4 0						
	Zone		Easting		Northing			Zone	Easting		Northing		

### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated district includes the following parcels plus the portions of Railroad Avenue, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth streets abutted by these parcels and the right-of-way of Fifth Street extending north across the Skykomish River and bridge to the southern boundary of U.S. Highway 2:

- #505080-0005
- #506180-0070
- #506180-0085
- #506180-0095
- #780780-0225
- 0235
- 0240
- 0250
- 0251
- 0440
- 0445
- 0455
- 0460
- 0465
- 0610
- 0645
- 0660
- 0670
- 0675
- 0695

262611-9017 (Tax Lot 17, Section 26, Township 26N, Range 11E, Willamette Meridian)

Depot Building and its roof overhang plus that portion of parcel 262611-9017 containing its associated grounds described thusly: Beginning at the centerline of Third Street, if extended, S more or less 75 feet beyond the S boundary of Railroad Avenue; then W more or less 502.10 feet more or less parallel to the S boundary of Railroad Avenue; then N more or less 75 feet to the south boundary of Railroad Avenue.

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### Verbal Boundary Justification

The district includes the intact resources associated with commercial and social development in the historic center of Skykomish.

### List of Photographs

Photographer: Kent Sundberg, King County Office of Cultural Resources

Date: September 15, 1999 (photos 1-3) and March 26, 2000 (photos 4-6)

Negatives on file at King County Office of Cultural Resources, 506 Second Avenue, Suite 200,  
Seattle, WA 98104

Photo 1: Looking E/NE along Railroad Avenue W from SW corner of District. Buildings from left to right: Skykomish School, Superintendent's House, Town Maintenance Building (Manual Training Building), Homestead Vintage Stove Co. (Maloney's General Store), Skykomish Hotel, Whistling Post Tavern (The Olympia), Cascadia Hotel (Hatley Hotel).

Photo 2: Looking N up N Fifth Street from the central Sedge of the District. Buildings and structures from left to right: Homestead Vintage Stove Co. (Maloney's General Store), Skykomish Bridge, Skykomish Hotel.

Photo 3: Looking W/NW along Railroad Avenue E from SE corner of District. Buildings from left to right: Great Northern (Skykomish) Depot, in far distance Town Maintenance Building (Manual Training Building) and Homestead Vintage Stove Co. (Maloney's General Store), Skykomish Hotel, Whistling Post Tavern (The Olympia), Moore Rental (Patrick McEvoy) House, Cascadia Hotel (Hatley Hotel).

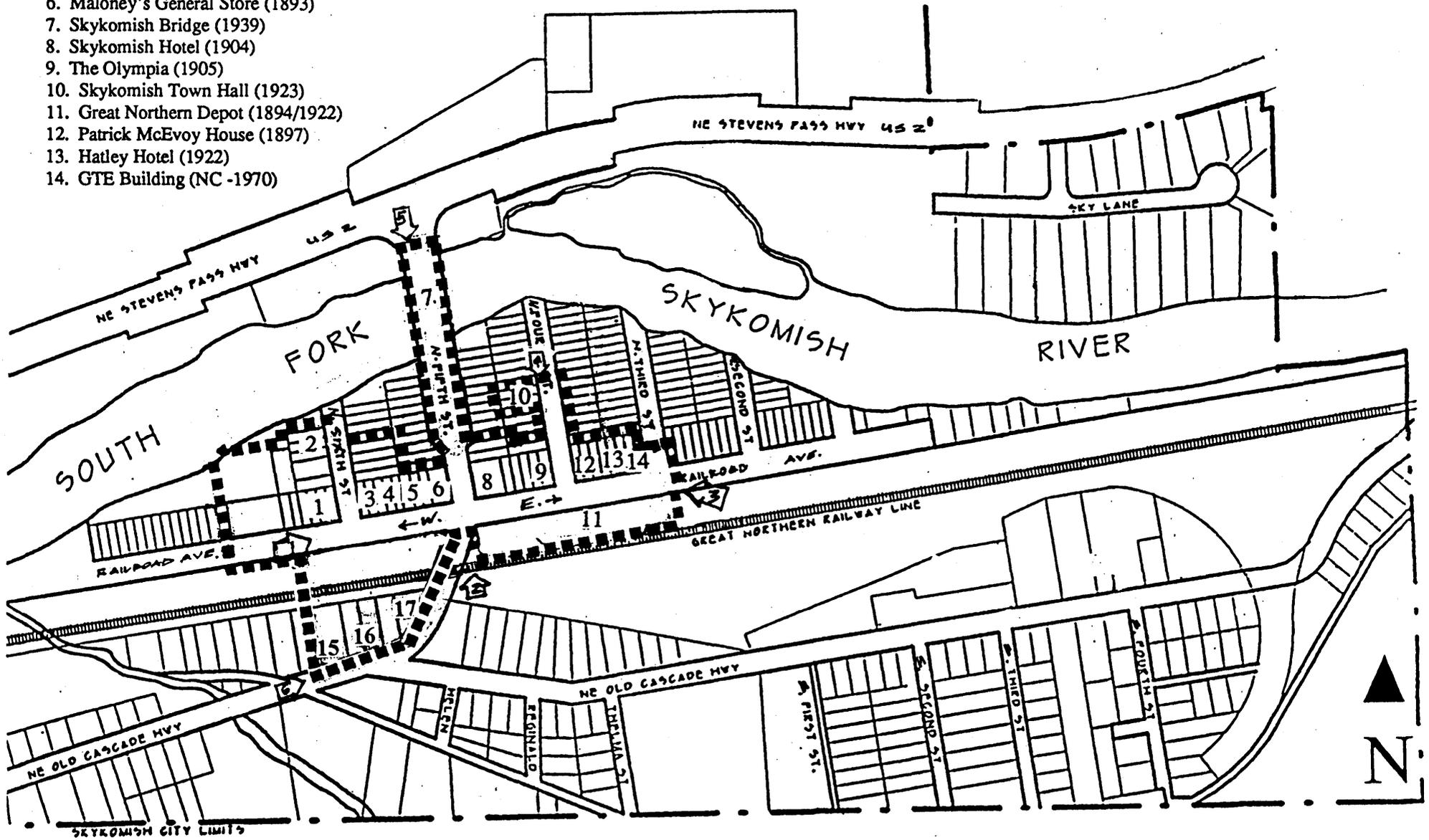
Photo 4: Looking S/SE along N Fourth Street from a point just north of the City Hall. The City Hall is shown on the right, the western part of the depot in the distance over the center of the street, and the rear of the Olympia to the right of the depot.

Photo 5: Looking S/SW from US 2 from a point N/NW of the bridge. N Fifth Street and the Skykomish Hotel (in the distance) are visible through the bridge portal

Photo 6: Looking E/NE from a point SE of the Masonic Hall on the Old Cascade Highway. The Masonic Hall fills the center and left of the frame.

# Skykomish Historic Commercial District

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Skykomish School (1936)                         | 15. Skykomish Masonic Hall (1924) |
| 2. Teacherage (1920)                               | 16. Apartments (NC 1928)          |
| 3. Superintendent's House (NC-1999 reconstruction) | 17. King County Library (NC 1958) |
| 4. Manual Training Building (1923)                 |                                   |
| 5. Maloney's Warehouse (1906)                      |                                   |
| 6. Maloney's General Store (1893)                  |                                   |
| 7. Skykomish Bridge (1939)                         |                                   |
| 8. Skykomish Hotel (1904)                          |                                   |
| 9. The Olympia (1905)                              |                                   |
| 10. Skykomish Town Hall (1923)                     |                                   |
| 11. Great Northern Depot (1894/1922)               |                                   |
| 12. Patrick McEvoy House (1897)                    |                                   |
| 13. Hatley Hotel (1922)                            |                                   |
| 14. GTE Building (NC -1970)                        |                                   |



■■■■■■■■ District Boundary

📷 2 Photo Viewpoint

Scale 0

750

1125

1500'