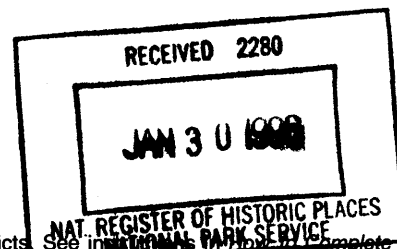


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions on 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 an 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 Litchfield Commercial Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number N. Sibley Ave. between Depot and 3rd Sts. not for publication N/A

city or town Litchfield vicinity N/A

state Minnesota code MN county Meeker code 093 zip code 55355

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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.)

[Signature] Date 1/17/96

Signature of certifying official/Title Ian R. Stewart
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society
State of 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 commenting official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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] Signature of the Keeper Edson A. Beall Date of Action 3/1/96

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 include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
36	10	buildings
	2	sites
		structures
		objects
36	12	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: financial institution, specialty store, business, professional organizational

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: specialty store, business, professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Italianate, Queen Anne Romanesque Revival

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Neo-Classical Revival, Georgian Revival Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

Limestone

roof Composition

other

See Continuation Sheet

Narrative Description

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

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: N/A

- 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 of age or achieved 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 Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1882-1945

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kratochvil, John (builder)

Peterson, J.M. (builder)

See Continuation Sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Meeker County Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approx. 7.5 acres

UTM References Litchfield North, Minne. 1967
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	3 7 9 7 9 0	4 9 9 8 2 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 5	3 7 9 9 6 0	4 9 9 8 0 8 0

3	1 5	3 7 9 9 1 0	4 9 9 7 8 9 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 5	3 7 9 7 8 0	4 9 9 7 9 3 0

See continuation sheet

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 Susan Granger and Kay Grossman

organization Gemini Research date September 15, 1995

street & number 15 East 9th Street telephone (612) 589-3846

city or town Morris state MN zip code 56267

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

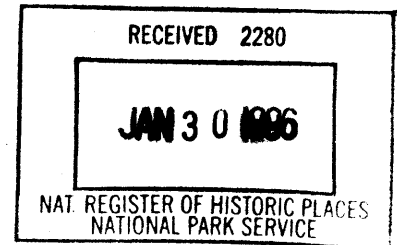
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

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Litchfield Commercial Historic District
Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

7. DESCRIPTION

MATERIALS (CONTINUED)

Walls: Ceramic Tile
Roof: Ceramic Tile

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Litchfield Commercial Historic District encompass most of the central business district of Litchfield, a small farming community of about 6,000 people in western Meeker County. The majority of the buildings in the district face Sibley Avenue, the community's main commercial thoroughfare which runs north and south through the center of town. Just south of the district, Sibley Avenue crosses the former St. Paul and Pacific railroad tracks which travel east and west through Litchfield.

The district is comprised of 48 properties located on five city blocks along Sibley Avenue. The blocks are bisected by north-south alleys which provide rear service entrances to the buildings, most of which face Sibley. The four blocks flanking Sibley between Depot Street and Second Street also have unusual, short, east-west alleys which further divide the blocks. These alleys enter Sibley Avenue at mid-block, and produce breaks in the continuous streetscape of commercial facades which face Sibley. Most of the buildings that stand immediately north and south of these alleys (such Behren's Furniture at 226-230 N. Sibley Ave.) have two facades which are exposed to the public street and have second story windows, not unlike buildings which are sited on the corners of blocks. One of the alleys, on Block 59, has been filled with a circa 1940 commercial building at 219 N. Sibley Ave.

The 48 properties in the district consist of 36 contributing buildings, 10 non-contributing buildings, and two non-contributing sites (vacant lots). Most of the buildings in the district are two story, brick commercial buildings that were built between circa 1882 and circa 1940. At least 15 of them were constructed of cream-colored brick which was manufactured at Litchfield. Most of the buildings have stone foundations. Several of the properties originally had small woodframe sheds or warehouses located at the rear of the lots. All of these secondary structures have been demolished.

About half, or 24 of the 46 buildings, were built before circa 1900. About fourteen of the buildings were built between circa 1900 and 1930, four were built between circa 1930 and 1945, and four represent post-World War II infill construction. The latter four are non-contributing to the district because they postdate the period of significance.

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Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

The district contains 14 Italianate style buildings--an unusually large number for a central business district sited in central Minnesota. The buildings at 109-113, 115-119, 127-129, 202, 217, 226-230, 231-239, and 242-244 N. Sibley Ave. are particularly good examples of the style. Most of these structures were built of cream-colored brick which ornate brick and metal cornices. They have segmental arched window openings that are decorated with brick window hoods and, in some cases, bracketed window sills. The Brown Block at 202 N. Sibley, John Palm General Merchandise at 215 N. Sibley, and the I.O.O.F. Hall at 225 N. Sibley have particularly elaborate cornices.

Two of the buildings in the district, the Brown Block at 202 N. Sibley and the Masonic Building at 242-244 N. Sibley, display a somewhat rare use of Victorian polychromy with cream-colored brick which is contrasted by a liberal use of dark reddish-brown brick trim. The district contains several examples of the influence of the Queen Anne style on commercial design. The largest of these is the Wells Brothers General Store at 100 N. Sibley which has rounded and segmental arches over its rectangular windows, stained glass, and an ornate cornice. The district's examples of the Neo-Classical Revival style include the First National Bank at 201 N. Sibley.

Many of the buildings dating from the 1910s and 1920s are restrained examples of the Commercial Style, such as Hanson's Cafe at 213 N. Sibley and Dielke's Cleaners at 214 N. Sibley. Most of the ten examples of this style are faced with medium or dark brown brick and have simple geometric brickwork around the windows and at the cornice level. Near the center of the district is a colorful example of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne design--the Hollywood Theatre at 210 N. Sibley Ave. The intact facade of the theater has original doors, poster display cases, and an elaborate marquee. The Black and White Inn (circa 1935) at 311 N. Sibley is an intact, modest example of the Streamline Moderne style.

Many of the buildings in the district have been altered very little with the exception of changes to the storefront display windows, entrances, and signs. A few of the buildings such as the Litchfield Hardware Company at 205 N. Sibley, Hanson's Cafe at 213 N. Sibley, and Dielke Cleaners at 214 N. Sibley have intact storefronts. Others have been altered but retain some original storefront elements such as cast iron enframing columns, storefront cornices, and recessed entrances. A few of the buildings such as Johns Brothers Hardware at 218-222 N. Sibley and the Masonic Building at 242-244 N. Sibley retain original elements inside the stores such as pressed metal ceilings and cast iron supporting columns. Most of the buildings have rear additions facing the alley.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3 Litchfield Commercial Historic District
Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

A brief description of each property in the district follows. The properties are arranged by street address. They are identified by street address on the accompanying map.

19 E. Depot St.

R. Welch Building (now LeCole Outdoor Advertising)

Built 1906

1 Contributing Building

The R. Welch Building is a small, one story building faced with reddish-brown brick. It was designed in a commercial version of the Queen Anne style. At the top of the building is an ornate metal cornice with egg and dart molding and heavy corbels. There is lettering in the cornice that reads "R. Welch 1906." The three bay main facade has rounded arched window and door openings. A 1908 photograph shows that the outer two rounded arches each contained a pair of double hung windows with 1/1 sash and a rounded-arched transom, and that the central arch contained a double-leaf doorway beneath a similar transom. Above these openings are three rectangular panels of checkerboard brickwork. The window and door openings have been filled with new windows, a door, and new brickwork. The rear facade is covered with stucco. This building housed Litchfield's telephone exchange by 1913. The Litchfield Telephone Company was incorporated in 1898 and was purchased by the Northwestern Telephone Exchange Company (predecessor of Northwestern Bell) in 1917. The telephone office was located here until circa 1956.

21 E. Depot St.

Herman Furniture (now Remnants Plus)

Circa 1915

1 Contributing Building

Constructed circa 1915, this one story Commercial Style building is faced with reddish-brown brick. It has subdued decorative brickwork at the cornice level. The storefront was altered circa 1970 with vertical wood and new display windows but retains a recessed storefront entrance. From at least 1917 through 1930 a harness shop was located here. During the 1940s this was the Herman Furniture store which became Eddy and Fenner Furniture in the 1950s.

23-25 E. Depot St.

Parking Garage (now B. Lease and Sons)

Circa 1915

1 Contributing Building

This one story brick building has a gabled roof with stepped parapet walls forming false fronts on the main and rear facades. The main facade is faced with cream-colored glazed brick and the rear facade is faced with common

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Section number 7 Page 4 Litchfield Commercial Historic District
Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

brick and has several garage door openings. There are three simple panels of recessed brickwork at the cornice level on the main facade. The storefront has been altered with new brickwork, windows, and a pent eave. This parking garage, with a cement floor and an original capacity for 50 cars, was located on this site by 1917. It replaced a previous woodframe livery stable. By 1930 the southeastern storefront housed a printing office and the southwestern storefront was a restaurant. During the 1940s both storefronts were occupied by restaurants--the western storefront was Adolph Nelson's Cafe, and Dewey Johnson operated the restaurant in the eastern storefront.

12 E. Second St.
Music Plus (eastern part)
Circa 1915
1 Contributing Building

Music Plus is a two story building which is faced with reddish-brown brick with white mortar joints. The second story appears to have been added circa 1940. The first story has two large rectangular windows with brick sills. Above the windows are decorative brick rectangles at the storefront cornice level. The second story has rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash. The rear facade is covered with corrugated metal. In 1913 this site was a vacant lot, but by 1917 a one story brick bakery had been constructed here. It was still a bakery in 1930.

18 E. Second St.
Askeroth Paint Company (now Smith's Appliance)
Circa 1915
1 Contributing Building

The main facade of this two story brick Commercial Style building is faced with medium-brown brick and the side and rear walls are cream-colored common brick. The eastern and southern walls have rectangular and segmental-arched window and door openings. Some of these window openings have been filled with brick. The main facade has rectangular second story window openings with 6/1 sash, and two separate storefronts. The second story appears to have been added circa 1940. The western storefront has a metal canopy with horizontal fluting and metal-enframed display windows. The eastern storefront has three rectangular window openings which have been filled with glass block. The building has limestone and brick sills, brick-faced lintels, and subdued geometric brickwork at the cornice level and at the storefront cornice level. In 1917, a one story brick music store was on this site, and by 1956 the building was occupied by Askeroth Paint Company which had been established in 1885 and owned by several generations of the Askeroth family. Upstairs was the Anderson Insurance company and the office of Dr. F. C. Brown.

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Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

26 E. Second St.
Horseshoe Cafe (now Franklin Life)
Circa 1898
1 Contributing Building

Italianate in style, this two story woodframe building was constructed circa 1898. It is one of few woodframe commercial buildings still standing in downtown Litchfield. It is covered with clapboard and has a wooden cornice supported by ornate brackets. The second story has narrow rectangular window openings with 2/2 sash and architraves over the window frames. A paneled, single-leaf door at the eastern end of the storefront leads to the second story. There is clapboard siding on the rear facade, rectangular windows which probably replace original rectangular windows, and a single-leafed door with a transom. The first story of the main facade has been altered with a circa 1950 storefront which retains a recessed entrance. This building housed a restaurant from at least 1903 through the 1950s. By 1956 it was occupied by the Horseshoe Cafe (established in 1949).

35 E. Second St.
U. S. Post Office
Built 1934
Architect: Louis A. Simon
Contractor: John Kratochvil
1 Contributing Building

The post office is a one story Georgian Revival style building which is basically intact. It is faced with English-bonded reddish-brown brick with light-colored mortar joints. It has a hipped roofed lobby portion (covered with ceramic tiles) and a flat-roofed rear wing. It has brick quoins at the corners and smooth, yellow limestone trim. The rectangular window openings have 12/12 sash, brick sills and lintels, and limestone keystones. At the center of the five-bay main facade is a Classically-inspired entrance with fluted, square pilasters supporting an entablature and an ornate broken pediment. There are two original hanging lamps on either side of the entrance. The rear has a two story office portion and a one story brick 1975 garage addition. The L-shaped lobby has a ceramic tile floor in geometric designs, paneled doors, painted woodwork, paneled wainscoting, oak furniture, and fixtures such as original post office boxes, window, and counter. In the lobby is a three-foot by four-foot mural entitled "Street Scene" which was painted by Elof Wedin in 1937. The Litchfield Post Office was funded by an \$85,000 federal relief grant. Construction began in 1934 and was completed in September of 1935. The cornerstone of the building reads: "Henry Morgenthau Jr., Secretary of the Treasury; James A. Farley, Postmaster General; Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect; George O. Von Nerta, Supervising Engineer, 1934."

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Litchfield Commercial Historic District
Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

25 W. Second St.
Baril's Paint (now Video Cinema)
Circa 1920
1 Contributing Building

This two story Commercial Style building is located at the western edge of the historic district. It is faced with medium-brown brick. The second story has rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash. On the eastern wall some of the windows have been reduced in size. The storefront has been altered with limestone and glazed metal panels and there is a one story rear brick addition. Baril's Paint, operated by Wilfred, Hilda, and Dale Baril, opened here in 1951. The Barils had been operating a decorating service in Litchfield since 1926. An auto parts store was also located in this building.

100 N. Sibley Ave.
Well Brothers General Store (now Sibley Antiques)
Built 1892
1 Contributing Building

This two story building has a prominent site at the northeastern corner of Sibley Avenue and First Street and is commercial Queen Anne in style. The building is faced with medium brown brick and has a canted southwestern corner where the main entrance was originally located. The western and southern facades have an ornate brick and metal corbelled cornice which was originally topped by decorative cresting. The cornice above the southwestern corner contains the date "1892." Flanking the date are two corbels which originally supported a triangular projection with three tall finials. The western and southern facades have many rectangular window openings which are topped by rounded and elliptical brick arches that are filled with checkerboard brick patterning. The windows have rockfaced limestone sills and several have stained glass transoms. A 1908 photograph shows these windows filled with 1/1 sash. The eastern facade, which has been covered with stucco, has segmental-arched window openings. The main storefront retains a storefront cornice, a recessed entrance, and fluted storefront columns. It has modern display windows. A second storefront at the southeastern corner has been covered with vertical wood. This building was originally constructed as a general merchandise store. During the late 19th century through at least 1908 the Wells Brothers General Store, Litchfield's largest general store, occupied this building. Wells Brothers was gutted by fire on November 11, 1908. The Wells Brothers were followed by Greenberg's general store in the 1910s or 1920s, and later by the Greep-Trueblood store, operated by the Osdoba family.

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105 N. Sibley Ave.
Greenbriar Floral
Circa 1970
1 Non-contributing Building

This one story, concrete block, stucco-covered building was built circa 1970 and is non-contributing to the district. A large hotel called the Howard House, constructed in 1880, originally stood on this lot. It was later known as the Lenhardt Hotel.

106 N. Sibley Ave.
Noren Theatre
Circa 1890
1 Contributing Building

Italianate in style, this two story cream-colored brick building has tall and narrow segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods, keystones, and smooth limestone sills. A brick string course connects the windows at springing block level. There is an ornate decorative brick cornice from which a central datestone has been removed or covered. The side and rear facades are cream-colored brick. The rear facade has tall, narrow segmental-arched window openings, many of which are filled with brick and concrete block. It has a circa 1930s movie theater storefront with two sets of double-leaf doors, vertical metal fluting, and poster display cases. The marquee has been removed. This building housed a hardware store in 1896 and a clothing store in 1903. By 1913 the first floor was a movie theater with club rooms on the second floor. By 1930 a printing shop was occupying the second floor above the theater. During the 1920s this building housed the Noren Theatre, then it became the Unique Theatre which showed its first "talking movie" on November 30, 1929.

108-110 N. Sibley Ave.
H and R Block and Kellogg Barber Shop
Circa 1885
1 Non-contributing Building

This one story building's main facade is faced with salmon-colored brick which dates from circa 1950. It has a false front and a flat canopy held by guy wires. There is corrugated metal siding across the rear portion and a small one story concrete block addition at the rear. This building housed a millinery shop between at least 1887 and 1917.

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109-113 N. Sibley Ave.
Meeker County Offices, Farmers and Merchants Bank
(now Nickelodeon Antiques and Boyd's)
Circa 1882
1 Contributing Building

This two story Italianate style building is faced with cream-colored brick. It has an ornate brick cornice with corbeling and a brick medallion at the center. A brick projection which originally rose from the center of the cornice has been removed. The symmetrical main facade is divided into two halves. Each half has three segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods and smooth limestone sills. The three southern windows have shutters which are closed. Between the two halves of the facade the central bay has a rounded arched window which is flanked by brick piers. Two corbels have been removed from the base of the piers. The southern facade and the southern half of the rear facade are faced with cream-colored brick (which has been painted) and have segmental-arched window openings. The northern half of the rear facade is faced with reddish-brown common brick and also has segmental-arched window openings. The storefronts have been remodeled with new brickwork, display windows, and vertical wood but retain recessed entrances. There is a one story rear woodframe addition. Some rear window openings have been filled with vertical wood. Erected circa 1882, this building apparently housed County offices until the Meeker County Courthouse was completed in 1885. In 1887 the southern storefront was a jewelry and music store, the northern storefront was a drugstore, and there were offices and a meeting hall on the second floor. By 1896, a printing shop and offices were located above the jewelry and drugstore. A clothing store was located in the southern storefront between at least 1903-1930. From circa 1906-1932, the Farmers and Merchants Bank (organized in 1906 and closed in 1932) was located in the northern storefront. Hotel rooms for the Lenhardt Hotel, which stood south of this building, were located on the second floor. By 1930 there were shops in both storefronts and the second level was a photography studio. By 1956 the building was owned by Art L. Tostenrud who operated Viren-Johnson's Clothiers, which was established in 1906.

112-114 N. Sibley Ave.
Retail Store
Circa 1890
1 Non-contributing Building

This one story, woodframe, gabled-roofed building has composition board siding on the northern facade. The main facade is faced with very thin yellow brick with smooth limestone sills. It has a flat canopy extending over the sidewalk. The facade dates from circa 1950. This building housed a plumbing shop and confectionery store in both 1896 and 1903, a cobbler and cigar shop in 1913 and 1917, and a restaurant in 1930.

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Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

115-119 N. Sibley Ave.

Johnson General Store, Nygaard's Jewelry (now New Life Upholstery
and Deanne's Country Village Shop)

Circa 1885

1 Contributing Building

Italianate in style, this two story cream-colored brick building has a symmetrical facade which is divided into two halves by a central brick pier. Each half has four closely-spaced segmental-arched window openings with bracketed, smooth limestone sills, brick window hoods with limestone keystones, and a limestone string course at the springing block level. At the top of the building is a decorative brick cornice. Gray limestone piers flank the storefronts. The southern storefront retains its metal cornice, a recessed entrance, and an entrance to the second story. The northern storefront retains a recessed entrance. This building stands on the southern side of an east-west alley and therefore has two principal facades (east and north). The northern facade has segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods and an early enclosed fire escape. The rear facade is built of common brick with segmental arched window openings. There is a ghost of painted lettering reading "Fairway Grocery" on the rear facade. The storefronts have been altered, some of the rear window openings have been reduced to fit rectangular sash, and there is a one story concrete block rear addition. The northern storefront housed a bank in 1887 and 1896, a grain office in 1903, Nygaard's Jewelry in 1913 and 1917, a grocery wholesaler at the rear in 1913, and a cigar factory on the second floor in 1917. The southern storefront was a general store from at least 1887-1917. This store was operated by A. C. Johnson for many years. For many years during the 1930s, the Silverberg and Olson grocery was located in the southern storefront. By 1956 the building was occupied by Tostenrud's Jewelry owned by Al C. Tostenrud.

Circa 116 N. Sibley Ave.

Vacant Lot

1 Non-contributing Site

This vacant lot is located south of the Coast to Coast building.

120 N. Sibley Ave.

Coast To Coast Total Hardware

Circa 1970

1 Non-contributing Building

Coast To Coast is a concrete block, brick-faced building that is one story in the front and two stories at the rear. The rear has intact windows. It is non-contributing to the district because of its recent construction date.

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Litchfield, Meeker County, Minnesota

126 N. Sibley Ave.
Ed Scarp's Cafe (now Litchfield Chiropractic)
Circa 1915
1 Contributing Building

This two story Commercial Style building is faced with textured brown brick and has brick sills and brick-faced lintels. There is tile coping at the top of the main facade and three rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash at the second story. The storefront was altered circa 1960 with new brickwork and display windows. There is a concrete block rear addition. Between at least 1917 and 1930 Ed Scarp's Cafe was located here. By 1956 it was occupied by the Black Cat Hotel and Cafe, owned by Fred A. LaLonde. Thorp Loan and Thrift later moved here. It is now occupied by Drs. Bachman and Curtis, chiropractors.

127-129 N. Sibley Ave.
Langren Furniture (now C. J.'s and Meeker County Food Shelf)
Circa 1885
1 Contributing Building

This two story, Italianate style cream-colored brick building has a symmetrical main facade which is divided into two halves. Each half has four segmental-arched window openings with 2/2 sash, smooth limestone sills, and intact brick window hoods. At the top of the building is a tall, decorative brick cornice with corbeling, finials, and a triangular projection at the center. The storefronts have brick cornices with corbeling. This building stands on the northern side of an east-west alley and therefore has two principal facades (east and south). The southern facade has segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods and an early enclosed fire escape. The rear facade is cream-colored brick with segmental-arched window openings. A one story brick wing was added to the rear before 1903. The storefronts have been altered. A house, an ice house (later an ice cream factory), and sheds were once located at the rear of the lot (razed). The southern storefront was a dry goods store in 1887, a clothing store in 1896, and a drugstore between at least 1903 and 1930. The northern storefront was a dry goods store in 1887 and a furniture store between at least 1896 and 1917. The furniture store and mortuary was operated by a Mr. Langren, followed by Dewey Johnson, then Lennart Erickson in 1946, and later Swanson and Hagglund. By 1956, Butterwick Drugs was located in the building. This business was established as Lofstrom Brothers in 1906 and became Butterwicks in 1946 under the ownership of Foster Butterwick.

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130 N. Sibley Ave.
Koerner's Meats (now Sunrise On Main Gift Shop)
Circa 1898
1 Contributing Building

The main facade of this two story Italianate style building is covered with cream-colored brick which has been painted with a thin red veneer of coloring. The main facade has contrasting dark reddish-brown brick trim. There are three tall, narrow segmental-arched window openings into which smaller rectangular double-hung windows have been set. The window openings have brick window hoods which are joined by a string course, and brick sills. The brickwork at the cornice level has been altered and the storefront was altered circa 1945. The northern side of the building is covered with corrugated metal. The rear facade has a one story brick addition and a one story concrete block addition. By 1903 a meat market was located on the first story of this building and a printing business was in the basement. There was also a one story building at the back of the lot (razed). A meat market was still located here in 1917 and the building in the back was a sausage factory. Through the years the meat markets have been known as Koerner's Meat Shop (established by Gottlieb Koerner in 1870 and later operated by Mrs. Koerner through at least 1947), Gordhammer's, Guy Larson's Meats, and Sam's (Peterson) Meat Market.

Circa 132 N. Sibley
Vacant Lot
1 Non-contributing Site

This vacant lot is located between 130 and 134 N. Sibley Ave. The one story building that stood on this lot burned in the 1980s.

134 N. Sibley Ave.
Linne's Bakery (now Music Plus (western part))
Circa 1885
1 Non-contributing Building

This two story, stucco-covered woodframe building has a hipped roof and originally had a bracketed cornice. The storefront retains its recessed entrance but has been altered with new brickwork and new display windows. The second story has two pair of rectangular window openings with double-hung sash. The southern facade is covered with vertical metal siding. A two story drug store was located on this site in 1887, and by 1896 it had become a confectionery and book store. In 1903 a saloon was located here. By 1917 the building housed a bakery and restaurant. This has been the location of Linne's Bakery, Rayppy's Bakery, Sandren's Shoes, and John's Shoes.

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135 N. Sibley Ave.
First State Bank of Litchfield (now Litchfield Public Library)
Circa 1968
1 Non-contributing Building

The First State Bank of Litchfield is constructed of concrete block and faced with medium-brown brick. At the rear of the building is a curved drive-up teller window. It now houses the public library and is non-contributing to the district due to its recent construction date. The First State Bank was organized in 1929 from a predecessor firm, the Bank of Litchfield, which was established in 1891. The Bank of Litchfield was located in a previous building on this site which had been built in 1891.

201 N. Sibley Ave.
First National Bank (now Pizza Ranch)
Built 1898
1 Contributing Building

The First National Bank is a two story Neo-Classical Revival style building which stands on a prominent corner lot. The second story is faced with purple-colored Roman brick with thin mortar joints and the first second story is faced with multi-colored red and black textured brick. The building has a large metal cornice and decorative brickwork at the top of the second story. It has rectangular window openings which are edged with egg and dart molding and filled with double-hung sash. The building originally extended farther to the west on its lot and had a rear storefront supported by fluted cast iron columns with ornate capitals at the southwestern corner. The rear portion of the building has been demolished and the rear facade is now faced with pink-colored common brick. The storefront on the main facade was originally supported by fluted cast iron columns with ornate capitals. This storefront was refaced with polished purple and gray granite panels circa 1955. The first story has new windows, the second story windows are boarded, and there is a band of stucco at the storefront cornice level. The First National Bank of Litchfield was organized in 1902 from the former Meeker County Bank. In 1930 it became the Northwestern National Bank. It was located here from 1902 through at least the 1960s. The building also housed professional offices such as those of attorney Leroy A. Gayner (established in 1930) and dentist H. M. Silverthorne, as well as Sederstrom Realty (established in 1920). A barbershop was located in the basement for many years. At one time a one story tin shop was situated at the rear of the lot (razed).

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202 N. Sibley Ave.
Brown Block (recently Seward Kemp Drug)
Built 1884
Contractor: J. M. and P. Peterson
1 Contributing Building

The Brown Block is a richly ornamented, two story Italianate style building constructed of cream-colored brick with contrasting red brick trim. It is one of the most ornate buildings in the historic district and stands at the northeastern corner of Sibley Avenue and Second Street. The main facade is dominated by an elaborate brick and metal cornice which steps up at the center in a pediment that is topped by a finial. The cornice has rows of brick corbeling, a brick medallion, and other decorative brickwork. Beneath the cornice are three tall, narrow rectangular window openings. The outer windows are topped by red brick segmental arches filled with decorative brick patterning. Above the central window is a semi-circular date block which reads "Brown's Block 1884 J. M. and P. Peterson, Builders." The first story has a simple storefront cornice. The southern facade, facing Second Street, has rows of segmental-arched window openings (now filled with wood paneling) which have red brick window hoods. There are several red brick string courses at the sill and springing block level and two elliptically arched entrances at the southeastern corner of the building. At the top of the southern facade is a corbeled brick cornice which is interrupted at intervals by ornate second story piers which project above the roofline. The piers have brick fluting and corbels at the base. The rear facade is covered with stucco and has tall, narrow segmental-arched window openings, one with 4/4 sash. The main storefront has been covered with vertical wood. Originally this structure housed a clothing store on the first floor, and offices on the second floor. In 1892 J. B. Atkinson's pharmacy (known after 1899 as the Atkinson-Anderson Drug Company) was located in the main storefront. By at least 1913 a barber shop was located in the basement and by 1917 a wallpaper and paint store was in the rear storefront. C. M. Anderson owned the pharmacy until 1944 when it became Carlson's Drug owned by Harry Carlson. In 1955 Carlson sold the store to the Sward-Kemp Drug Company. A number of professionals had offices on the second floor of this building including physicians Harold and Cecil Wilmot and physicians Karl and Lennox Daniels who had offices here for many years in the early to mid-20th century.

205 N. Sibley Ave.
Litchfield Hardware Company (now Cynthia's Wig and Beauty Salon)
Circa 1895
1 Contributing Building

This two story structure is faced with dark brown brick and has brick sills and brick-faced lintels. It has two rectangular window openings into which new casement windows have been set. The storefront is largely intact with cast iron enframing columns, a recessed entrance, and large display windows, although the transoms have been covered with wood. The cornice has been removed and the rear facade is covered with stucco and has a one story

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concrete block addition. In 1896 this building was a saloon. From 1903 through at least 1956, it housed the Litchfield Hardware Company on the first floor and a photography studio on the second floor. The Litchfield Hardware Company was founded by F. W. Lucas. Later owners of the hardware store included Emil Anderson and Walfrid Lund, followed by Richard and Lillian Olander by 1956, and later the Duane Larson family.

207 N. Sibley Ave.
Wahlberg's Five and Dime Store (now Ben Franklin)
Circa 1895
1 Non-contributing Building

This two story building is faced with reddish-brown brick and was designed in a commercial version of the Queen Anne style. It has been altered considerably at the first story with a circa 1980 brick storefront and a brick-faced concrete block addition to the north. The upper part of the main facade is intact, however, and retains an ornate pressed metal cornice, and three sets of rectangular window openings topped by rounded and elliptical brick arches that are filled with checkerboard patterning. The side and rear walls are built of common brick and have segmental arched window openings. From at least 1896 through 1917 this was a dry goods and clothing store. Until 1917, a two story warehouse was located at the rear of the lot (razed). By 1956 Whalberg's Five and Dime Store, established in 1924, was located here. W. E. Whalberg was the proprietor.

208 N. Sibley Ave.
Fransein's Cafe (recently Sears)
Circa 1885
1 Non-contributing Building

This two story, stucco-covered woodframe building has a gabled roof. At the top of the main facade is a false front with a simple cornice. The second story has four rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash and simple architraves over the window frames. The storefront has a recessed entrance and a doorway to the second floor on the southern end. The rear facade is covered with pressed metal which simulates brickwork and has rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash. Historic photographs indicate that this building was originally faced with clapboard and had a simple bracketed cornice at the top of the main facade. The second story of the main facade has been covered with stucco. The storefront has been altered with permastone and new display windows. There is a one story woodframe rear addition. This building was a hardware store and tin shop in both 1887 and 1896, a billiards hall in 1903 and 1913, and a restaurant in 1917 and 1930. From the 1930s through the 1960s Fransein's Cafe was located here. In later years, it was the Shamrock Cafe, followed by the Sears store.

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210 N. Sibley Ave.
Hollywood Theatre
Built 1935
1 Contributing Building

The Hollywood Theatre is an Art Deco style, two story building. The main facade is faced with smoothly-dressed coursed ashlar Kasota limestone on a polished granite base. It has rectangular window openings with original sash and smoothly-dressed limestone sills. The southern storefront, which enters the movie theater, has a stepped facade. There is decorative fluting and two circular disks at the cornice level. Mounted on the facade is a dramatic marquee with a flat canopy with display lettering, and a tall vertical marquee reading "Hollywood." The marquee has elaborate Art Deco detailing including rounded forms and stepped circular bands. The theater storefront has an intact ticket buying window, two double-leaf doors with porthole windows, and intact poster display cases. The northern side of the building has an intact 1930s storefront with a Moderne arrangement of transom windows. There is an original door to this storefront, and an original door to the upstairs apartment. There are no windows on the side and rear walls which are built of gray common brick. The Hollywood Theatre opened in the fall of 1935. The northern storefront housed McIver's Shoe Store during the 1940s and 1950s, and later Burke Jewelers.

213 N. Sibley Ave.
Hanson's Cafe (now Larry's Barber and Style
and Roy E. Anderson, Accountant)
Circa 1920
1 Contributing Building

This two story Commercial Style building is very intact. The main facade is faced with medium-brown pressed brick which has an unusual speckled glaze. The second story has rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash, and brick sills and soldier course lintels. The storefront is basically intact with original doors and windows. By 1930 Hanson's Cafe was located here. By 1956 this building was occupied by Roy E. Anderson, Accounting and Insurance (which had been established in 1947), and by Sederstrom Realty, owned by Victor A. and Vern Sederstrom.

214 N. Sibley Ave.
Dielke Cleaners (now Crow River Area Youth For Christ)
Built 1929
1 Contributing Building

The Youth For Christ office is a two story Commercial Style building faced with textured, dark red and brown brick. It has slightly projecting brick cornices with contrasting white-colored brickwork at the roofline and above

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the storefront. The wide rectangular window openings have brick sills and brick-faced lintels. The storefront, which is intact, has a recessed entrance, and there is another recessed entrance which leads to the second floor. The rear wall is built of common brick with a one story concrete block addition. C. F. Dielke built this drying cleaning establishment in 1929. He had founded his business in 1923. His daughter, Ruth, and son-in-law, Howard Koehn, took over the business and operated it as Howard's Cleaners until at least the 1960s.

215 N. Sibley Ave.
Palm General Merchandise (now Doffing's Smart Wear)
Built 1894
1 Contributing Building

The metal cornice at the top of this two story brick Italianate style building reads "1894, John Palm, General Merchandise." The cornice has finials and a central pediment-like projection, and rises above a row of brick corbeling. The main facade has four second story rectangular window openings that are topped by rounded brick arches that are filled with brick patterning. The arches are supported by brick corbels at the springing block level. The windows have rockfaced limestone sills. The storefront has an entrance to the second story at the northern end. Inside the storefront is an intact metal ceiling. At the rear of the building is a pre-1903 one story brick wing which is unusual because it has a storefront facing the alley with a false front and a corbeled brick and metal cornice. The facade of this storefront is faced with reddish-brown brick. Alterations to the building include the replacement of the second story windows on the main facade and the alteration of the main storefront. This building was built as Palm General Merchandise and remained a general merchandise or department store for most of its history. Phil J. Palm and Roy Anderson published the Meeker County News in the basement from 1939-1951. Palm ceased publication in 1951 and sold the subscription list to the Independent Review. At the same time, the Nordlie and Swenson grocery store was located on the first floor.

217 N. Sibley Ave.
Litchfield Independent Review
Circa 1890
1 Contributing Building

This two story, brick Italianate style building has an ornate brick cornice with corbeling and finials. The finials mark the tops of brick piers which enframe the main facade. It has tall, narrow segmental-arched window openings with smooth limestone sills and brick window hoods which are joined at the springing block level by a course of decorative brickwork. There is a brick storefront cornice. The storefront is basically intact, although the transom-level has been covered with vertical wood. The door to the second

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story is at the northern side of the main facade. The building was constructed on the southern side of an east-west alley and has two principal facades, east and north. Like the main facade, the northern wall has segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods joined at the springing block level. There is a tall segmental arched doorway with a brick hood at the northwestern corner. The rear facade is covered with stucco. This two story clothing store was constructed by 1896 and remained a clothing store until at least 1913 when it became a printing office. A one story addition with iron columns was added to the rear of the building by 1903 (razed). The Litchfield Independent was launched on May 30, 1876, and was published for many years by H. I. Peterson, Roy Peterson, and John M. Harmon. It merged with the Litchfield Review in 1939 to become the Litchfield Independent Review which was jointly published by Harmon and C. W. Wagner. In 1946 longtime employee Raymond Lenhard replaced Wagner as Harmon's partner. The newspaper has been published continuously for almost 120 years.

218-222 N. Sibley Ave.

Johns Brothers Hardware (now American Legion and Reed's Office Supply)

Circa 1915

1 Contributing Building

The main facade of this two story building is faced with dark reddish-brown brick with white mortar joints. It has a row of six rectangular window openings at the second story with brick-faced lintels and brick sills. There are slightly projecting brick cornices at the roofline and above the storefront. Historic photographs indicate that lettering reading "Johns Brothers Co Hardware" was once installed above the second story windows. The building stands immediately south of an east-west alley and therefore has two principal facades (west and north). The northern wall is faced with common brick and has tall, narrow rectangular window openings. There is the ghost of a painted sign reading "Olson's Hardware" on the northern facade's brickwork. Inside the southern storefront is an intact pressed metal ceiling and a row of cast iron support columns. The rear wall is common brick which has been painted. The storefronts have been altered with brick, steel, and vertical wood, and the window openings have been filled with brick and wood. There is a one story concrete block rear addition. In 1917, this structure housed Johns Brothers Hardware. It was later Olson Hardware Company owned by Earl Olson. When the building was divided into two storefronts, the hardware remained in the southern storefront, and the post office moved into the northern storefront. Wiendenheft's Grocery and Abdnor's Hardware also occupied space in this building in later years.

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219 N. Sibley Ave.
Tobkin's Jewelry (now Chamber of Commerce)
Circa 1940
1 Contributing Building

Tobkin's Jewelry is a one story Commercial Style structure which was built on the site of an east-west alley which originally bisected this side of the block. It is faced with medium-brown brick. The storefront has a circa 1950 facade with jewelry display cases and metal fluting. The rear facade is built of common brick and has rectangular window openings filled with glass block. The building was constructed for Tobkin's Jewelry which was owned by Eugene Tobkins and Bill Stewart. It later became Stewart's Jewelry. The business remained at this location until 1990.

223 N. Sibley Ave.
I.O.O.F. Hall (southern half) (now Heartland Community Action)
Circa 1885
1 Non-contributing Building

This two story brick Italianate style building has been covered with stucco and has an altered storefront. Most of the southern facade and the rear are faced with cream-colored brick and have segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods that are tied together at the springing block level by a course of decorative brickwork. A circa 1940 photograph of this block shows that this building once had a cornice very similar to that of the adjacent building at 225 N. Sibley Ave. The rear facade is covered with stucco and now has rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash. There is a one story rear addition. This building is non-contributing to the district due to its alterations. In 1887 it housed a general store and in 1896 it housed a millinery. Between at least 1903 and 1956 the first story was a hardware store. The International Order of Foresters (I.O.O.F.) Hall was located on the second floor of this building and the building to the north between at least 1896 and 1903. Between 1913 and at least 1956 this lodge hall was known as the Commercial Clubroom. A tin shop (later a grocery warehouse) was located at the rear of the lot (razed). The Coast to Coast store was located in the building by 1956 and remained here until 1992.

225 N. Sibley Ave.
I.O.O.F. Hall (northern half) (now Moose Brothers Pizza)
Circa 1890
1 Contributing Building

This two story, cream-colored brick Italianate style building has tall, narrow segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods and smooth limestone sills. It has an ornate, intact pressed metal cornice with finials and a central triangular projection. The northern and rear facades are constructed of the same brick and have segmental-arched window openings. On the rear is a one story brick wing which is original or an early addition.

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The storefront has been altered with new display windows and stucco. By 1896 a boot and shoe store was on the first story of this building, and the International Order of Foresters (I.O.O.F.) Hall was located on the second floor of this building and the building to the south at 223 N. Sibley. By 1913 the lodge hall was known as the Commercial Clubroom and the first floor was a clothing store. In 1930, the one story rear wing was a grocery warehouse.

226-230 N. Sibley Ave.
Behren's Furniture and Mortuary (now Natural Foods Co-op
and Main Street Cafe)
Circa 1888
1 Contributing Building

This elaborate Italianate style two story building has an ornate brick cornice, brick window hoods, limestone sills, and closely-spaced segmental-arched window openings with 1/1 sash. It is constructed of cream-colored brick. The main facade is divided into two halves by a central brick pier. The first story has two storefronts, both with central, recessed entrances. The building stands immediately north of a narrow east-west alley and therefore has two principal facades (west and south). Like the main facade, the southern side wall has closely-spaced window openings with brick window hoods. There is an early fire escape stairway on the southern wall. The rear facade is cream-colored brick. Two, one story concrete block additions have been added at the rear. The storefronts were altered with stucco and new brickwork around the 1940s. During the early 1900s Peter Behrens' Furniture and Mortuary was located in the northern storefront. Later it became a grocery store, Berquist Electric, and then a Pamida Store. Cox's Market, established in 1914, was located in the southern storefront from the 1920s through the 1960s. Freeman Cox operated this business for many years and then his son, Merlin, ran the meat market until the 1960s. After that, the Farmer's Daughter Restaurant was located here.

227 N. Sibley Ave.
Gross and Whitney Jewelry (now Stewart's Gifts and Jewelry)
Circa 1902
1 Contributing Building

This one story building has an intact metal cornice above a row of brick corbeling and an intact metal storefront cornice with egg and dart molding beneath a row of brick dentils. The building was nearly identical to the building next door to the north at 229 N. Sibley Ave. There is a pre-1917 concrete block rear addition. The storefront was altered circa 1970 with new display windows and limestone facing. Between at least 1903 and 1930 this was a jewelry store. Early owners included E. C. Gross and Walter Whitney. It was later Setterberg Jewelry. During the 1960s, the Minnegasco office was located here. Stewart's Jewelry moved into this building in 1990.

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229 N. Sibley Ave.
McGowan Millinery (now Heartland Headstart)
Circa 1902
1 Contributing Building

This one story building has an intact metal cornice and a recessed, centrally located entrance. The cornice is nearly identical to that of the building next door to the south at 227 N. Sibley Ave. The main facade is faced with reddish-brown brick which appears to be a replacement of the original brick. The storefront was altered circa 1950 and there is a concrete block rear addition, built circa 1960. This building housed a millinery shop by at least 1903. By 1956 it was occupied by McGowan Millinery (established in 1901) and was owned by the McGowan sisters. Mary McGowan had opened a dress shop in Litchfield in 1885 and was eventually joined in business by two of her sisters. Johnson Drug and later Teske Drug were located here in the 1950s and 1960s.

231-239 N. Sibley Ave.
City Drug Store (now Schaefer's Studio, Uppercut Barbers,
and Olson Agency)
Circa 1885
1 Contributing Building

Three storefronts are located in this large two story, Italianate style, cream-colored brick building located at the southwestern corner of Sibley Avenue and Third Street. The main facade is divided into three four-bay sections, each flanked by vertical piers of brick quoins. Historic photographs suggest that the central third of the building may have been built first. The brick on the facade of the center section differs slightly in color from that of the southern section, and the brick on the northern third of the building has been painted. Across the top of the main and northern facades is a brick cornice comprised of two rows of corbeling and a row of dentils. Each third of the building has four tall, narrow segmental-arched window openings with brick window hoods and bracketed, smooth limestone sills. There are similar windows with brick window hoods and bracketed sills on the northern facade. The rear has early two story and one story brick additions with segmental-arched window and door openings. The center section has a somewhat intact storefront, which has an intact pressed metal ceiling inside. The northern storefront has a cast iron column at the corner of the building. The southern storefront has been altered with new display windows, brickwork, and a pent eave. On the northern side of the building an enclosed stairway has been added. The City Drug Store was one of the first occupants of the middle storefront before the northern and southern storefronts were added. The southern storefront was a bank and insurance

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office in 1887 and an insurance office between at least 1896 and 1917. The middle storefront was a drugstore in 1887, an unidentified store in 1896, and a bakery and confectionery between at least 1903 and 1917. For many years the middle storefront was "Judge" Harris' Confectionery, then Waller Drug, and, in the 1940s, Johnson Drug. The northern storefront was a grocery in 1887, a millinery in 1896, vacant in 1903, and a variety store in 1913 and 1917. The northern storefront was once J. C. Jack's Ben Franklin store (the second Ben Franklin store in the U.S., established in 1904), followed by Marlow Abdnor's hardware store, and Falknor's Appliance. The second story of the building has housed the A.O.U.W. Hall, offices, and a printing shop, and was a business college in 1903. There was once a shed and a 1 1/2 story ice house at the rear of the lot (razed).

234 N. Sibley Ave.
Gambles (now Prints Charming and KLFD Radio)
Circa 1888
1 Contributing Building

Constructed circa 1888, this two story building is faced with cream-colored brick which has been painted. The main facade has four second story rectangular window openings with limestone sills. The rear facade is cream-colored common brick. There is a one story rockfaced concrete block rear addition built circa 1930. A circa 1940 photograph of this street indicates that the main facade of this building was once identical to that of the building to the south at 226-230 N. Sibley Ave. The first story storefront has been altered with stucco, new brickwork, and new display windows. A cornice has been removed, the window openings have apparently been changed from segmental-arched to rectangular in shape, and plywood has been placed in the windows. By 1896 this building housed a confectionery store. By 1903, a furniture store had moved in, and by 1917 it was a billiards parlor. During the 1930s and 1940s, attorney Ray Dart had his offices on the second floor. It later became the Gambles Store, selling hardware and housewares. Gambles had opened in Litchfield in 1931. Al Hummel, the proprietor beginning in 1950, had been an employee since 1931.

236 N. Sibley Ave.
Brown's Tavern (now Schaps and Kluver, Attorneys)
Circa 1920
1 Contributing Building

This two story Commercial Style structure is constructed of hollow clay tile. The main facade is faced with medium-brown pressed brick. At the top of the facade is a slightly projecting brick cornice. There are rectangular window openings with 1/1 sash, brick sills, and brick soldier course lintels. The storefront retains intact display windows with transoms and a recessed entrance. The rear facade is constructed of tile and brick, and there is a

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one story woodframe rear addition. During the early 20th century, Dan Brown's Tavern and Restaurant was located here. Cook's Meat Market was located in the building during the 1930s and 1940s and it was later Rooney Real Estate.

240 N. Sibley Ave.
Harding Cleaners (now Litchfield Cleaners)
Built 1950
1 Non-contributing Building

The main facade of this one story concrete block building is faced with brown brick. At the rear is a one story concrete block addition. It was built in 1950 as Harding Cleaners, owned by Harold Harding.

242-244 N. Sibley Ave.
Masonic Building (now Hardware Hank)
Circa 1889
1 Contributing Building

This two story Romanesque Revival style building stands at the northern edge of the district and is constructed of cream-colored brick. It has dark red contrasting brick trim which includes an ornate brick cornice with corbeling and checkerboard brickwork, and heavy brick window hoods. The main facade is dominated by a row of second story rectangular window openings which are topped by dark red brick rounded arches filled with brick patterning. The northern side wall has segmental-arched window openings with dark brick hoods and sills. (A circa 1940 photograph shows these windows filled with segmental-arched 9/9 sash.) At the northeastern corner of the building there is a large, rounded arched entrance beneath a red brick arch which has smooth limestone springing blocks with incised floral carvings. At the keystone of the arch is a limestone circle carved with Masonic symbols. The rear facade has segmental-arched window openings. Inside the storefront is an intact, pressed metal ceiling and a row of smooth, intact cast iron support columns which run east and west through the center of the building. Exterior alterations include the remodeling of the storefront with new brick, ceramic tile, and display windows, and the filling of the window openings with glass block and brick. The building has housed a Masonic Hall on the second story and a retail business on the first story throughout its history. In the early 20th century, John Mullen's Dry Goods and Groceries was located here. Later it was Mellquist's Department Store and in 1927 through about the 1940s it housed the J. C. Penney Company. Henry Stoetzel was a longtime manager of J. C. Penney. In the 1960s this building housed Woolworth's Department Store.

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301-305 N. Sibley Ave.

Robertson Block/Robertson Hospital (now Edward D. Jones and
Minnesota Extension Service)

Built 1909

Contractor: Jeff Schelde

1 Contributing Building

This two story Neo-Classical Revival style building is faced with hard, medium-brown pressed brick. The cornice has been replaced by a band of metal. The second story has rectangular window openings with smooth limestone sills, brick jack arches, and brick keystones. There is a simple metal storefront cornice. There are two storefronts on the main facade, both of which have been altered, and there is another storefront at the southwestern corner of the building. Originally called the Robertson Block, this building was built for the Drs. William and Archie Robertson as a hospital. The second story served as Litchfield's hospital between 1909 and 1915 when a new Litchfield Hospital was constructed. The first floor was occupied by a general store on the northern side, and a jewelry store on the southern side. By 1917, the northern storefront was occupied by a bakery and restaurant. Offices were then located on the second floor.

309 N. Sibley Ave.

Kokavy's Bakery (now Suzie's)

Circa 1885

1 Contributing Building

Constructed circa 1885, this two story brick building has an unusually tall brick cornice with corbeling. It is commercial Queen Anne in style. The second story has rectangular window openings with continuous rockfaced limestone sills, and wide continuous rockfaced limestone lintels. The storefront was altered circa 1960 and has a flat canopy held up by rods. A two story woodframe building has been standing on this site since at least 1887. It was apparently veneered with brick around 1905. By 1913, a boot and shoe store was located on the first floor and a lodge hall was located on the second floor. For many years this was a bakery. Various names of the bakery through the years were Kokavy's Electric Maid Bakery, followed by Bergman's Bakery (established in 1940 by H. H. Bergman), Rayppy's New Bakery, Clarence Nelson's Bakery, and Frank Forsberg's Bakery. During the 1940s the building housed the Igloo, which served a variety of ice cream dishes. Johnson Furniture, established in 1951, was also located here.

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311 N. Sibley Ave.
Black and White Inn (now Parkview Lunch)
Circa 1935
1 Contributing Building

Built circa 1935, this small one story building is faced with glazed yellow ceramic tile. It was built of hollow clay tile and has a flat roof. The storefront has restrained Moderne features such as glass block at the entrance and window surrounds enframed in metal. This restaurant was originally named the Black and White Inn, owned by a Mr. Wood. During the 1940s it was the Janousek Cafe.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECT, BUILDER (CONTINUED)

Peterson, P. (builder)
Simon, Louis A. (architect)
Schelde, Jeff (builder)

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Litchfield Commercial Historic District is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, significance to the broad patterns of our history, in the area of Commerce. The district is significant as a uniform collection of late 19th and 20th century commercial buildings which comprise most of the historic portion of downtown Litchfield. The buildings are strongly associated with Litchfield's historic role as an agricultural trade center on the St. Paul and Pacific (later the Great Northern) railroad line. In addition to their role in Litchfield's economic history, the buildings collectively serve as an unusually intact example of a late 19th and early 20th century central business district in a small Midwestern farming community. The district is significant within the statewide historic context entitled "Railroads and Agricultural Development 1870-1940."

Litchfield was established along the tracks of the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad which was built through Meeker County in 1869. The first settlers to the area, a small group of Norwegian immigrant farmers, had arrived in Ness Township about a decade earlier in the mid-1850s. The village was platted in June of 1869 on land which had been owned by George B. Waller but had been sold to the St. Paul and Pacific. The St. Paul and Pacific and Waller were co-proprietors of the townsite, and Waller built the first house in Litchfield in 1869. Litchfield was named after a family of three brothers who helped finance the construction of the St. Paul and Pacific through the area and in other parts of the state--E. Darwin Litchfield, Egbert E. Litchfield, and Edwin C. Litchfield. Another member of the family, William B. Litchfield, was general manager of the St. Paul and Pacific in 1869.

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In 1869, the year that Litchfield was platted, it became the governmental seat of Meeker County, winning the honor from Forest City, a small town located along the Crow River. Securing the county seat was an important factor in the townsite's future development since all county residents who needed to transact official business now traveled to Litchfield to visit the county offices. Many patronized Litchfield's hotels, restaurants, and stores.

In 1870, one year after Litchfield was platted, the town's population numbered 353. By 1880, it had almost quadrupled to 1,250. The population grew to 2,098 in 1885 but dropped to 1,899 in 1890. It then steadily rose between 1895 and World War II, reaching 2,044 in 1895, 2,280 in 1900, 2,333 in 1910, 2,790 in 1920, 2,880 in 1930, 3,920 in 1940, and 5,000 in 1947.

The Litchfield area was first settled primarily by Old Stock or native-born Americans. The 1860 census of Meeker County counted 928 residents, 61 percent of whom were native-born Americans. Most were from New York, New England states, Kentucky, and Virginia. A few Irish and Scandinavians were also enumerated.

By the 1880s large numbers of foreign immigrants, led numerically by Scandinavian and Germans, had moved into the area. In 1885 the county's 5,801 foreign-born residents were from Sweden, Germany, Norway, Ireland, Denmark, Canada, and Finland. Thirty years later in the 1910s, half of the county's 18,000 residents were of Scandinavian descent, one-fourth were German, and one-fourth were of mixed descent (Brunner 1927, 183).

For virtually all of its existence, Litchfield has been a one-industry community with an economy centered around agriculture. Farm trade centers like Litchfield served agriculture in several major ways: by receiving and exporting the agricultural products of surrounding farms; by importing and supplying groceries, hardware, lumber, and services to farmers; and by serving as social, cultural, and political centers for farm families. Farm children attended the Litchfield high school and, in 1924, 43 percent of Litchfield's church membership lived in the country. In addition, farmers began to retire into Litchfield shortly after the turn of the century.

Sociologist Edmund Brunner, who studied rural agricultural villages in the mid-1920s, describes in detail eight rural communities, including Litchfield, in his 1927 book Village Communities. He writes of Litchfield (using the pseudonym "Lincoln"):

Lincoln is entirely a farmer's town. Seventy-five percent of its economic life is based upon agriculture; and even its industries, which employ only 130 at the peak of the season, are dependent on the soil and its products. The absence of definite neighborhood groups within the

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community, an area of roughly 110 square miles, proves that the farmers go to the village for their trading and for their social life. They are drawn there by the general attractiveness of the town, and by the good roads leading to it, as well as by its courthouse and its cooperative creamery. Three-fourths of any average audience at the moving-picture shows and open-air band concerts are country people" (Brunner 1927, 182).

Trade centers such as Litchfield were typical in the Midwest where, according to geographer John C. Hudson, "almost all the towns on the plains were founded for the single purpose of serving the trade brought by a surrounding agricultural population. Their reason for being was commerce, which superordinated all other aspects of town life" (Hudson 1985, 6). The establishment of these small agricultural trade centers along a network of railroad lines "is the dominant settlement pattern in a broad region beginning with the Grand Prairie of Illinois on the east, stretching northwest to the Canadian prairies, south through Texas, and west to the Rocky Mountain front" (Hudson 1985, 5). Like Litchfield, a large number of agricultural trade centers were founded by fiercely-competing railroad companies, or by persons affiliated with railroads. Each railroad company sought to maximize freight traffic along its lines by establishing grain collection and supply distribution points at carefully planned intervals along the tracks.

Farmers surrounding Litchfield planted wheat almost exclusively in the 19th century. Local historian Patrick Casey writes,

The period from 1869-1895 might be referred to as the wheat era. Open prairie had yielded easily to the plow and quickly came into cultivation. A ready market waited in Minneapolis and the railroad brought it to market. Litchfield, being the county seat, soon had elevators and the competition of different companies made it the best market. Wheat was marketed mostly in the winter and it was not unusual to find teams and sleighs waiting for the elevators to open on dark winter mornings and others still to be unloaded after dusk had descended. Wheat was hauled from all over the county to Litchfield, from Cosmos, Cedar Mills, Manannah and some was brought in from outside the county. A sample of wheat selected by Andrew Quinn from his own crop, won first place in world competition at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1892 (Casey 1968, 76).

Wheat production declined in Meeker County after about 1900, and by 1925 only a few acres were still dedicated to wheat. The raising of dairy cattle increasingly took its place, and between 1908 and 1923 the production of butter in the county rose by 108 percent (Brunner 1927, 184). Farmers had also begun to raise poultry by 1900. The 1920s saw a rise in livestock

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production, and by 1925 corn had become the principal field crop, grown first for livestock feed and then for the general market.

Many of the county's agri-businesses settled in Litchfield. The construction of elevators and mills near the railroad tracks began as early as 1869 when the first roller mill was built. By the 1870s, Litchfield was the principal grain market for the county and its elevators even received grain from Stearns and Renville counties. Grain elevators and flour mills were joined by creameries, livestock shipping associations, hatcheries, and produce companies. By the mid-1920s Litchfield's woolen mill employed 45 workers and the county's poultry, hides, furs, wool, cream, and eggs were collected and marketed by three different produce companies.

Among Litchfield's agri-businesses were several marketing cooperatives founded jointly by area farmers and Litchfield merchants. In 1886 the Farmers' Cooperative Elevator was organized in Litchfield by a group of farmers discontented with the difference between the price they were being paid for wheat in Litchfield and the price at which it was being sold at market in Minneapolis. At least two other cooperative elevators were also formed. In 1908 the Farmers' Livestock Shipping Association was established. Local cooperative creameries, which banded together as the Meeker County Creamery Cooperatives, gathered and marketed cream and butter. The Meeker County Creamery Cooperatives became the fulcrum of a statewide organization, the Minnesota Cooperative Creamery Association, which was founded in 1921. John Brandt, a Litchfield farmer, was elected the first president. The statewide cooperative built Minnesota's first milk drying plant in Litchfield in 1926, and in that year changed its name to Land o' Lakes Creameries. Land o' Lakes is still one of the state's largest dairy processors.

The buildings in the historic district were the center of Litchfield's pre-World War II retail and service economy. Farmers visited downtown Litchfield to buy lumber, hardware, implements, feed, groceries, and clothing. They visited banks, doctors, dentists, and barbers and patronized taverns and mortuaries. Most stores catered to the farmers' business by extending credit in accounts which often remained unpaid until after harvest.

The first commercial buildings in downtown Litchfield were built as soon as the town was platted. Building sites on Sibley Avenue began selling in July of 1869 for \$100 for a 25-foot lot. Many of the first generation of commercial buildings were small woodframe, false-fronted structures which could be built quickly with a minimal investment. (Few, if any, of these buildings remain standing.) In 1874, sidewalks were laid on the western side of Sibley. By 1884 Sibley Avenue had been graded through downtown.

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By the end of the 19th century much of downtown Litchfield had been rebuilt in brick. Many of these pre-1900 commercial buildings, including at least 15 in the historic district, were built with cream-colored brick which was made locally. The brickyard was started by Henry Ames in the autumn of 1882 at his farm two miles northeast of Litchfield. By the late 1880s the yard employed 24 men. By 1892 Ames was producing 25,000 brick a day and was unable to supply the demand (Litchfield, Minnesota 1969). The brickyard closed around the turn of the century.

Prosperity in the 1910s and 1920s led to the construction of more commercial buildings downtown, and by the 1920s many of the buildings in the historic district were heated by a municipal hot water heating system. Sibley Avenue was paved in May of 1919 from Fourth Street south to Lake Ripley. At about the same time, Litchfield joined many Midwestern cities which were establishing new electrically-powered "white ways" during the mid- to late 1910s. Sibley Avenue was illuminated with 35 five-globe streetlights on ornamental iron standards. The 1920s saw further improvements when Sibley Avenue became part of Minnesota Trunk Highway No. 10 in 1926. Paving of that highway occurred in April 1927. Also during 1927, the Litchfield Women's Club and the American Legion cooperated to enhance Litchfield's commercial district. The groups purchased flags and flag poles which were installed at the edges of the sidewalks along the business district. (More recently, the globed streetlights were replaced beginning in 1953, and the downtown streetlights were again replaced beginning in 1988. Trunk Highway No. 10 was repaved in 1976, and at the same time curb, gutter, and sidewalks along Sibley Avenue were replaced.)

Litchfield's commercial district was established and promoted by "an aggressive group of young people" according to one historian (Lamson 1939, 111). The first merchants and professionals who opened businesses in Litchfield in 1869 sold general merchandise, hardware, and lumber, and included a photography studio, a livery, a hotel, a railroad land office, a physician, and three lawyers. This vanguard was soon followed by two newspapers, banks, a drug store, a dress shop, a tailor shop, groceries, and six hotels. Many of these businesses were located in the buildings which still stand in the historic district.

Litchfield's banks, most of which were located within the boundaries of the historic district, loaned money to farmers for land, machinery, and feed, and also extended credit during the growing season. The town's banks were instrumental to the growth of the local farm economy. For example, the First National Bank was a leader in the establishment of the local livestock shipping association in 1908 and the state cooperative creamery association in 1921. In 1916 Litchfield's banks organized a local chapter of the Farm Bureau to promote scientific farming methods and increase profitability, and in 1920 alfalfa was introduced to area farmers when a Litchfield bank

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distributed 1,500 bushels of seed at cost (Brunner 1927; 185, 187). Farmers comprised 75 percent of the Board of Directors of the First National Bank in 1927.

Nearly all of Litchfield's doctors, dentists, optometrists, attorneys, and accountants had offices on the second floors of the buildings in the historic district. The First National Bank at 201 N. Sibley and the Brown Block at 202 N. Sibley, for example, had large numbers of professional offices through the 1950s. The Robertson Block near the northwestern corner of the district was built in 1909 to serve as Robertson Hospital. It was originally owned by Drs. William and Archie Robertson and was Litchfield's only hospital through 1915. The first floor storefronts were rented to retail stores.

Entertainment businesses such as the Noren Theatre at 106 N. Sibley and the Hollywood Theatre at 210 N. Sibley (built in 1935) were also located in the historic district. Buildings in the district are also associated with the development of communications in Litchfield. The telephone exchange was located in the Welch Building from the early 20th century until the mid-1950s. Most of Litchfield's newspapers were published in the district including the 119-year-old Litchfield Independent Review which is still in print. Finally, the Litchfield Post Office was located in various downtown buildings until the construction of a post office at 35 E. Second St. in the district's northeastern corner in 1934.

Downtown Litchfield was also the site of much of the community's fraternal activity. Groups such as Masons and the International Order of Foresters met in halls on the upper floors of the buildings. These buildings were also the headquarters for civic and professional associations which were founded by local merchants including the Litchfield Board of Trade (founded in the 1880s), the Chamber of Commerce, the Commercial Club, the Kiwanis Club (founded in 1939), and the Junior Chamber of Commerce (founded in 1946). Farm families participated in much of the social and cultural life. In 1924, 50 percent of Litchfield's Masons, 25 percent of the membership of the Eastern Star, 50 percent of the A.O.U.W., 50 percent of the Modern Woodmen, 60 percent of the Degree of Honor, and 33 percent of the Odd Fellows lived outside of the town's limits (Brunner 1927, 188).

Sibley Avenue and the buildings within the historic district also served as an unofficial social and cultural "heart" of Litchfield where residents and visitors gathered to mark important events. Numerous historic photographs show that the district's Sibley Avenue was a principal site for parades and spontaneous gatherings which celebrated the end of the two world wars, observed important political or patriotic anniversaries, and marked local events.

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In summary, the Litchfield Commercial Historic District is comprised of more than forty late 19th to mid-20th century commercial buildings which are well-preserved both individually and collectively. The district is strongly associated with Litchfield's role as an agricultural trade center in the Midwest. The buildings housed most of the town's retail stores, professional offices, service businesses, and banks, as well as being home to numerous newspaper offices, fraternal groups, and business associations.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

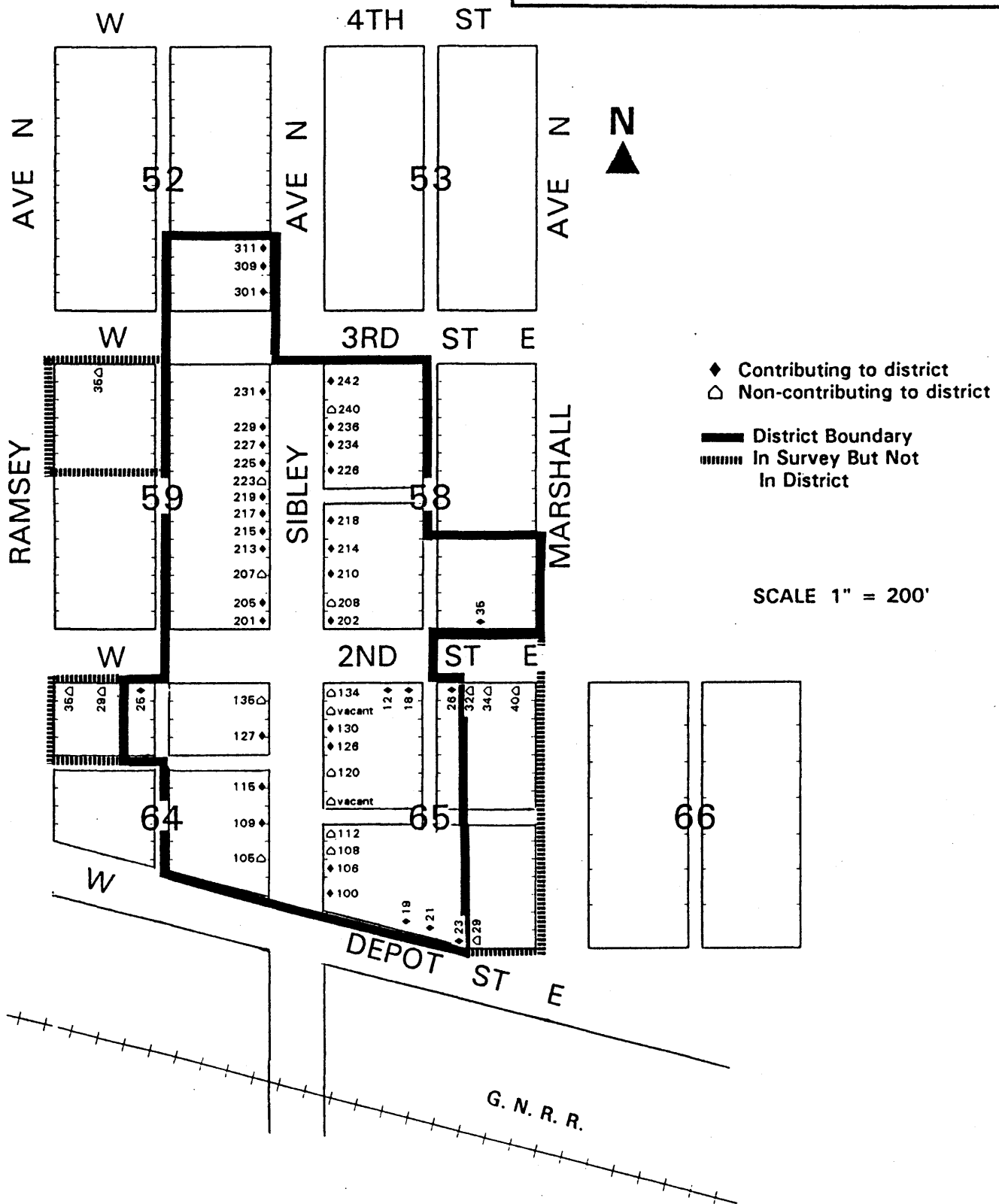
Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the Litchfield Commercial Historic District is shown by the solid black line on the accompanying map entitled "Litchfield Commercial Historic District, Litchfield, Minnesota."

Boundary Justification:

The boundary of the district encompasses a cluster of adjacent commercial buildings in the central business district of Litchfield which date from circa 1882 through circa 1945 and which retain integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Commercial buildings outside of the boundary of the district were excluded from the district because they either did not date from the period of significance or because they did not retain sufficient integrity to contribute to the district.

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Litchfield, Minnesota



map numbers correspond to street addresses in Section 7 (Description)