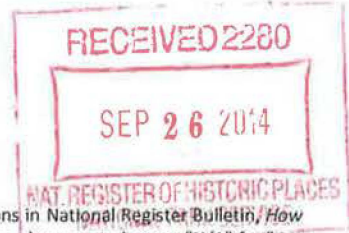


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Turner Court Apartments

Other names/site number DO09:0212-004

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & Number 3106 Dodge Street

City or town Omaha

State Nebraska

County Douglas

Not for publication  Vicinity

## 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 at the following level(s) of significance:  national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D



SHPO/Director

09-18-2014

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official

Date

Title

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_



Signature of Keeper

11-12-2014

Date of Action

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**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	
2		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
2		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements: Sullivanesque  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; OTHER: Hydrostone

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## Description

**Summary Paragraph** (Briefly describe the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The Turner Court Apartments are located in the midtown neighborhood of Omaha, Nebraska, and gain their name for neighboring Turner Park and Turner Boulevard. Turner Park and Boulevard are two contributing resources of the National Register listed Omaha Park and Boulevard Historic District (NRHP listed 2013). The three story apartment complex consists of two identical three story brick and hydro-stone buildings connected through a corridor in the basement, located at the northwest corner of 31<sup>st</sup> and Dodge Streets. This area retains a number of commercial, multiple family residential, and office buildings, but has seen significant change in the built environment due to the construction of Midtown Crossing, a new residential and entertainment district immediately across Dodge Street to the south. Historic apartment complexes are still scattered throughout the neighborhood, and include the Turner Court Apartments. The simple form and block materials of the secondary facades is enhanced by Sullivanesque style detailing on the two main facades. Although portions of the brick and Hydro-stone main façade have been painted, which reduces the sharpness of the applied detailing, the property retains a high degree of historic integrity.

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

### *Exterior*

The Turner Court Apartment complex, constructed in 1921, consists of two individual three-story, double Maltese cross buildings. The primary designed façade faces south on Dodge Street, but because of its location on the corner, the unornamented utilitarian east façade is also a strong visual presence on the site. Construction materials include brick and a masonry product called Hydro-stone which was manufactured by the Drake Realty Construction Company in Omaha, the builder of this complex. The main façade is faced with brown brick and ornamented by four brick pilasters spaced regularly across the main (south) façade rising the full-height of the building. These pilasters are capped with Sullivanesque style brackets that accent a simple cornice that runs the entire perimeter of the building, except on the southern facades, where the wide projecting cornice once supported by the brackets is now missing. Similar cast stone Sullivanesque details are located at either side of the main entry door. Narrow vertical windows set within brick spandrels rise in the center bay of the building further emphasizing the Sullivanesque detailing on the main façade. The remaining fenestration throughout the building consists of often paired one-over-one double hung units, with single window units at the projecting bays on the east and west facades of both buildings.

The secondary facades are all unornamented and finished with the Hydro-stone material which is a concrete masonry unit. The buildings are in fair condition, but do retain their physical integrity. There are no new additions or major alterations to the exterior of the property. The surrounding area which includes Turner Park and Turner Boulevard, as well as other neighboring historic apartment buildings north of the Turner Court Apartments on 31<sup>st</sup> Street contribute to the general overall character of the area.

### *Interior*

The interior of each building is identical, and though surface finishes have been painted or covered, such as carpeting over wood flooring and painted trim, they retain a high degree of historic integrity. Original windows and floor plans are retained in both buildings.

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Each building has a double loaded central corridor with 24 apartment units over the three floors, for a total of 48 apartments. Historically the apartments had two main entry doors from the central corridor; one from the kitchen to the corridor and one from the main living space to the corridor. Each unit is efficiently sized with a main living space, one bedroom, a small kitchen, and bathroom with walk-in closet. The direct kitchen access to the corridor has been removed so each unit has only the main door to the living space.

Although decorative trim is minimal, the units retain a high degree of historic integrity. The size, configuration, finishes, fenestration, and footprint remain unchanged from the construction of the building. Wood trim has been painted, carpeting added to the floors, and some have newer bathroom and kitchen features. The original door and window trim remains in place.

The basements of each building provide general storage space and laundry facilities. The original boilers providing steam heat through the radiator system are still in place and functioning. Simple concrete flooring and walls finish the basement surfaces.

**Physical Integrity**

The Turner Court Apartments retain a relatively high degree of historic integrity. Most notable, and as is evidenced from historic photographic documentation provided below, is the loss of a projecting cornice at the roof line of the buildings. It is unknown when this feature was removed, but is no longer present on the property today. A window pair on the main façade of the western most building has been covered with plywood and an exhaust vent placed in the opening.

The interior residential units have undergone very limited change. Other than maintenance and finish issues such as new flooring, paint, and updated appliances, the units retain their original layout and square footage. The images below show the relationship of the buildings to the street, and indicate that the very minimal setback, with virtually no extra space between the busy thoroughfare of Dodge Street and the main facades of the buildings has been retained through time and has not been impeded upon as a result of Dodge Street corridor being widened.



Turner Court Apartments from Dodge Street looking east. Photo taken by Robert Paskach on March 12, 1956. From Durham Museum Photo Archive.



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*Turner Court Apartments from Dodge Street looking east, showing the minimal setback from the street and the relationship of the buildings to Dodge Street. Photo taken by Robert Paskach on March 12, 1956. From Durham Museum Photo Archive.*

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**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 a grave.
- D** A cemetery.  
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** A commemorative property.
- F** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1921-1964

**Significant Dates**

1921

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

B. Hene

Drake Realty and Construction Co.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Turner Court Apartments are significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for their contribution to the broad patterns of the development of Omaha relating to the city's need for housing, and the development of the multiple family apartment dwelling across the city of Omaha. The buildings represent the boom of one of Omaha's population trends, and they define a critical corner at the confluence of Turner Park and Turner Boulevard illustrating Omaha's development pattern and building boom of

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the time. Turner Court Apartments was built as an apartment building and has been in continuous use as apartments since its construction in 1921. The apartments are currently fully occupied. The buildings are significant at the local level, contributing as a physical manifestation of the development of Omaha's expanding urban neighborhoods following World War I.

They are the identical twins to a triple building complex called the Terrace Court Apartments also built and developed by the same company, and currently listed in the National Register. Drake Realty and Construction Company developed these plans then proceeded to construct the three building complex called Terrace Court (listed NRHP 2008) first, then followed the year after with the completion of the two building complex Turner Court in 1921. Drake Realty and Construction Company was the largest apartment builder in Omaha during the 1920s. As a developer, they were lauded for their development strategy, ability to build wealth, and inventiveness in developing and locally producing a building material called hydro-stone. This allowed them to build across the city with great efficiency because of their ability to generate and store large quantities of building materials. The company was also steeped in controversy for their involvement in a tenant war on rental rates resulting eventually in the personal bankruptcy of the owner.

Developers and entrepreneurs such as William Drake and the Drake Realty and Construction Company utilized urban tracts of land to develop their properties and prosper as the city's need for housing boomed. Their properties served the identified housing needs of the time and focused in a concentrated area just west of the established downtown core. Although the Drake Company did not use large tracts of land for subdivision development, they did follow the planning movement to thoughtfully develop urban areas based upon timely needs and trends. This urban apartment complex represents one example of the Drake Company to fulfill the developing housing needs of Omaha residents, and is a significant contributor to the expanding city of Omaha and how that growth was represented in neighborhoods.

Turner Court Apartments are also eligible under Criterion C for their architectural merit as a representative example of an apartment building with Sullivanesque style detailing, a relative rarity in the Omaha area. The buildings represent the multiple use of a design generated by the Drake Realty and Construction Company, and their consideration to impact the Omaha area with buildings reflecting current and desirable architectural design elements.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**General Area History**

The city of Omaha is located on the eastern border of Nebraska on the banks of the Missouri River on a site conducive to trade in furs and with Native Americans. The town itself was platted in 1854 primarily to promote the selection of Omaha as the Missouri River crossing for the planned transcontinental railroad. The initial incorporation of the town laid out 320 city blocks with Farnam Street as the main commercial thoroughfare. Soon after, the town organizers found themselves in a battle for the territorial capital. Upon its incorporation in 1857, Omaha was named the territorial capital; however, by 1870 the capital was moved to Lincoln where it remains to this day.<sup>1</sup>

Despite losing the capital, Omaha quickly grew as a transportation center, communications hub and agricultural mecca. The city was the eastern terminus of the transcontinental railroad, and by 1861 Western Union Telegraph Company began stringing their telegraph lines until Omaha eventually linked the two coasts with communications systems as well. By the 1890s, Omaha cemented its presence as a major Midwestern

<sup>1</sup> Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission. A Comprehensive Plan for Historic Preservation in Omaha, 1980.

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commercial center and as a stronghold for the Union Stockyards, which eventually grew to be the biggest livestock center in the country.<sup>2</sup>

Omaha maintained a strong dedication to sophisticated transportation systems throughout its history, with the presence of the railroad, streetcars, and highway and street systems. The early commuter system in Omaha included an extensive streetcar service that transitioned from horse drawn cars to a fully electrified system by the 1880s. Following rapid commercial growth and a significant population boom in the 1880s, the city as well as the nation experienced an economic slowdown following the panic of 1893. Development paused during the early to mid-1890s because of this economic recession; however, it picked up again around the turn of the twentieth century. This era saw the need for and construction of large apartment complexes and new neighborhoods throughout the city. Around this time, in 1893 Mrs. Charlotte M. Turner, a wealthy citizen, donated land to the city's Park and Boulevard system. Not until after 1900 was the land developed as Curtiss Turner Park. The park, along with the neighboring boulevard, is currently located immediately south of the Turner Court Apartments. The boulevard known at the time as West Central Parkway was renamed Turner Boulevard in honor of the donor in 1913.<sup>3</sup> Sadly, Omaha suffered a devastating blow in 1913, when a severe tornado tore through the town destroying approximately 1800 homes and taking some 500 lives.<sup>4</sup> The resulting clean-up and housing demand drove significant construction activity.

After World War I, Omaha and the country experienced a strong housing boom. In the year 1922, the city saw its peak of residential construction with more houses built than any other year in Omaha. The 1920s saw great development with the stockyards, commercial industry and residential booms, but the following decade's Great Depression took its toll. Construction slowed and what was built was significantly smaller in scale than previous construction.

It was immediately prior to this period when in 1915 William B. Drake came to Omaha from Iowa, and with his brother George completed three rental houses by 1915.<sup>5</sup> The company continued in business until approximately 1930. Many of their projects were located along streetcar lines for ease of transportation, and they helped retain a walkable and easily accessible home place to work place relationship which met the demands of city housing needs. In 1922 the city saw its peak of residential construction with more properties built than any other year in Omaha history.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Wakeley, Arthur C. *Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County, Nebraska*, 1917.

<sup>3</sup> Mead and Hunt, *Reconnaissance Survey of Selected Neighborhoods in Central Omaha*, 2003

<sup>4</sup> Mead and Hunt, *Reconnaissance Survey of Selected Neighborhoods in Central Omaha*, 2003

<sup>5</sup> Omaha World Herald 3-18-1925, *William B. Drake, Once Apartment King, Bankrupt*

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

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*This 1974 aerial image of the Midtown area of Omaha shows the Turner Court Apartments and their physical proximity to Turner Park and the Interstate 480 interchange. (From Durham Photo Archive). Blue arrow indicates Turner Court Apartments.*

**Turner Court Apartments History and Drake Realty and Construction Company History and Significance**

The Turner Court Apartments were developed and built by the Drake Realty and Construction Company which was the largest apartment building developer in Omaha during the 1920s. William B. Drake was the co-founder and namesake of the company, along with his brother George. William came to Omaha as a recently graduated engineer from Iowa with high ambitions. He and his brother completed construction of their first rental properties in 1915, and soon began their biggest and namesake complex the Drake Court, a complex of 14 buildings centered along a designed central landscape (NR listed 1980, amended 2014).

Although prolific in their construction of thousands of apartment units across the city, during the last decade of its existence the company fought to retain resident occupancy in their units, and was engaged in a dispute with tenants over rental rates that resulted in a significant public outcry and battle between tenants and owners, that received national attention. Flourishing on the prolific development of Drake and his company, the Omaha World Herald newspaper likens the aggressive construction of Drake buildings across Omaha to “mushroom

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activity". At its height under Drake, the company constructed apartments at the rate of one floor per week, and the building of thirty-six apartments over thirty days resulting in thousands of housing units across the city.<sup>7</sup>

Ten years after the construction of the Drake Realty and Construction Company's first properties in Omaha, its founder and owner claimed personal bankruptcy and left Omaha for Chicago. He eventually returned to the city and remained until his death in 1935.<sup>8</sup> Following his personal bankruptcy the company continued to operate without any connection to Drake himself. The Evening World-Herald reported in their March 18, 1925 paper that William B. Drake dubbed the Apartment King was bankrupt. His holdings were estimated at \$4 million when he petitioned for voluntary bankruptcy stating that he had no remaining assets, and further was buried by liabilities in excess of \$160,000.00. Drake often split ownership of his buildings, with his company owning some, and him personally owning some, which likely contributed to his financial demise. Drake left Omaha in July of 1924 leaving the Drake Realty Construction company and the Drake Rental agency which he formerly headed to be absorbed by other stockholders.<sup>9</sup>

Drake was also at the heart of a controversy dubbed by the Omaha World Herald a "Tenant War" that most likely contributed to his financial demise and departure from Omaha. In 1920 the residents of the Drake Court Apartment, a complex of 14 buildings with a designed courtyard, waged a protest to combat a steep hike in their rent. This "war on alleged rent profiteers" involved 95% of the residents of the Drake Court apartments who signed a petition to refuse to pay a 25% increase in rent to the Drake Realty company. They further refused to move or relocate. The heated battle had tenants "grimly prepared to resist ouster proceedings in the courts if necessary."<sup>10</sup> This battle was a tangible example of how the company was most likely overstretched; the rent increases were required to pay dividends to stock holders and to cover the increase in construction and operating expenses of the company. In an attempt to ease the heated discussions, the company noted that not only were rents at Drake Court increasing, but rents at all their buildings would increase, and they were establishing higher rents in their new construction in order to meet their dividends. Tenants belied the claims of the company's increased operating costs since the condition and cleanliness of the buildings at Drake Court were faltering. One woman attending the public hearing on the rent hikes stated, "This talk about increased operating expenses is all foolishness. We wash our own windows or have them washed, and the halls are always in a disgraceful condition. The apartments themselves are not faultless. For instance, there are no flour bins, and no moulding boards."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> OWH 6-19-1921

<sup>8</sup> OWH 7-27-1935, "Drake Drops Dead"

<sup>9</sup> OWH 3-18-1925

<sup>10</sup> OWH 6-3-1920

<sup>11</sup> Ibid



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*Drake Court Apartments built by the Drake Realty and Construction Company located at Jones Street between 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets. Drake Court was a complex consisting of multiple buildings facing a courtyard. The Apartments were constructed between 1916 and 1921. The complex was listed in the NRHP in 1980 and amended in 2014)*

This protest eventually led to the formation of the Tenants Protective league which soon had 5,000 members and had a goal of 10,000 members. The League successfully fought for a more equitable method to determine apartment rental rates based on the actual value of the buildings. With the League, the owners proposed and discussed offers to turn over their properties to tenants if the tenants would guarantee a 6% interest. The Tenants Protective League supported the idea, but was not fully convinced that the 6% interest was a fair number. Supporting the rental rate formula were considerations such as the sanitary conditions mentioned at two particular Drake Realty units, the Drake Court and the Dartmouth apartments as well as fire protection including fire escapes. The Drake Company was forced to open their records for the Tenants Protective league to evaluate them. Heated controversy among the tenants and Drake Realty Company continued, but with the condition that Mr. Drake could not actively remove tenants from their units until the rate crisis was resolved. The company eventually resolved the rate hike issue by implementing a smaller increase, but establishing increased rates at their new units under construction.

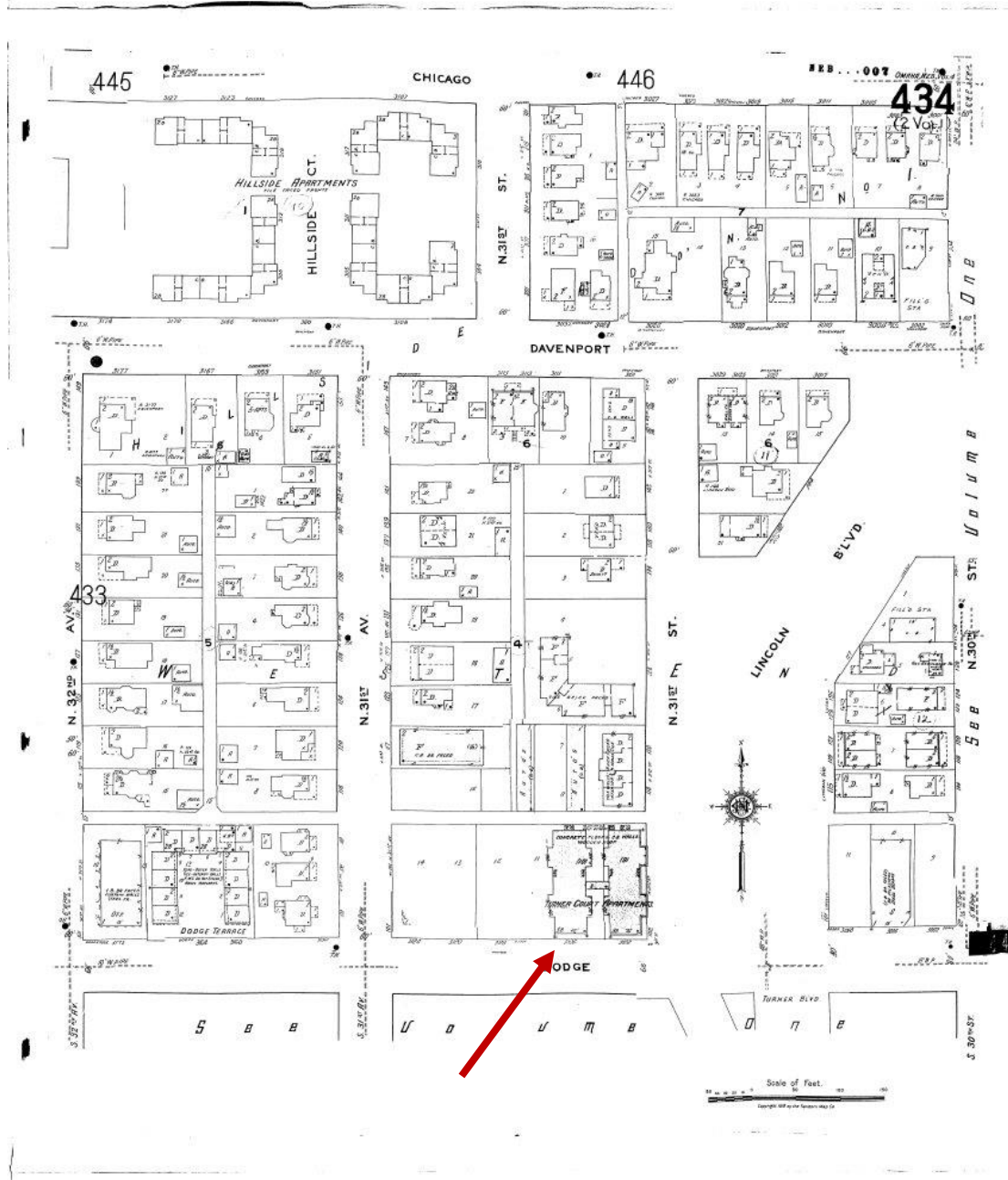
Despite and during this public controversy, the company continued to grow under its owner and namesake. By June of 1921, the company had investments of active construction in the city totally more than \$1 million. Also, in June of 1921 the most recent project constructed by Drake Realty Construction was “a four story hydrostone building of the maltese cross style of architecture now under construction...” (most likely a reference to Turner Court). Turner Court Apartments were described in July 1921, as “very desirable...new fireproof, modern, walking distance to business center, three-room apartments with 5-room accommodations and 1 small child to a family acceptable.”<sup>12</sup> It is likely that with the company’s preoccupation with the tenant wars, and the draw this caused on both the economic and human resources of the company, the effort to scale down was implemented by utilizing the existing design completed the previous year (1920) at the Terrace Court Apartments. This economy of scale would have helped to maximize profits in light of the tenant revolt.

<sup>12</sup> OWH 7-9-1921



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1962 Sanborn Map showing Terrace Court Apartments on Dodge Street. Image clearly shows the retention of the minimal set back from the road as well as the full utilization of the entire site for the complex, thus maximizing the potential of the site. Map Courtesy of Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office.

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***Hydro-stone***

Although cast stone materials have been used in construction for more than 100 years, it was mostly implemented as decorative trim or ornamentation applied to buildings. Products such as Frear Stone and Coignet Stone are examples. Contributing to the Drake Realty and Construction Company's success was their manufacture and utilization of the cast stone material called Hydro-stone. Consisting of a combination of gravel, crushed stone, sand and Portland cement that was molded under pressure, Hydro-stone could be formed into a variety of decorative elements.

One of Drake Realty and Construction Company's major investments was a distillery that they converted into a warehouse to store increasing quantities of building materials and a manufacturing plant that produced the hydro-stone units. This self-contained facility and their ability to buy and store bulk building materials contributed to the initial success and speed of the company's growth. Essentially a concrete masonry unit, hydro-stone was easily formed to use as decorative elements or left plain to use as a simple fire resistant construction material. They also built offices and factory floor to produce the hydro-stone material, generating both decorative and structural elements. During its first year of production, they produced hydro-stone for the construction of the Turner Court Apartments, its matching Terrace Court Apartments, Hanscom Park and Palmer Apartments. All of these properties included both structural and decorative hydro-stone elements. However, in the Hanscom and Palmer apartments the hydro-stone lintels and window elements were covered with stucco. These properties have a more Spanish or Mediterranean architectural style while the Turner and Terrace Court apartments left the hydro-stone exposed as the structural elements. The main street facing façade of each building incorporates the hydro-stone with brick in both decorative and structure detailing adding to the Sullivanesque style of the buildings. The sides and backs of these buildings retain the exposed hydro-stone as the finished wall material.

***Architecture***

The organic scrolling details and tall vertical windows in the Turner Court Apartments represent Sullivanesque style detailing, a relatively rare applied detail in the Omaha area. Sullivanesque style is named for famed Chicago architect Louis Sullivan. Sullivan is often credited as the father of the modern American skyscraper and coined the term "form follows function" which he believed as a base line tenant of architectural style.

Sullivan was born in Boston in 1856 and attended the architecture school at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for one year before quickly realizing grand ideas and moving to Paris to study at the famed Ecole des Beaux-Arts school. Throughout his career Sullivan was highly regarded as one of the most unique and innovative architects within the modern Chicago School Era. He was noted for his inventive and original architectural ornamentation consisting of flowing and organic designs based in nature.

Sullivan contributed to creating a new vertical emphasis on the high rise structure. New technology like elevators, steel frame construction, and curtain walls allowed architects to design up rather than being limited to the number of stories a person could comfortably walk, and being confined within the limitations of the massive structural base required to support anything more than four stories. Sullivan was particularly noted for his use of light weight and easily molded materials such as terra cotta to create his richly curved applied ornamentation. He utilized the formal form of the classical column with a base, shaft, and capital in the structure and ornamentation of his high rise structures. This gave the high-rise a somewhat less imposing structure from the pedestrian point of view with a clearly defined main or commercial level that was clearly defined from the shaft of the structure with applied ornamentation.

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He practiced in Chicago, first with the firm of Adler and Sullivan, and after 1895 in his own practice. His notable designs are seen across the country and include the Carson Pirie Scott Store (1899) in Chicago, the Auditorium in Chicago (1889), and the Wainwright Building in St. Louis (1890).<sup>13</sup>

The influence of Sullivan's detailing is relatively rare in the Omaha landscape. Few buildings were constructed with Sullivan-esque style detailing. The Rose Realty-Securities Building discussed below is the only building in the city that truly represents the high rise influence of Sullivan's architecture with few other buildings employing the applied detailing that was one of the key identifying features of the style. Outside of the Rose Realty-Securities building the other properties that reflect Sullivan-esque detailing include a number of apartment buildings all built by the Drake Realty Company between approximately 1915 and 1925. These apartments are all located in the midtown area and include Turner Court Apartments, Terrace Court Apartments, and the Drake Court Apartments which are primarily Georgian Revival with Sullivan-esque detailing.

The Sullivan-esque Style in Omaha is relatively rare. Two other properties within the midtown area that reflect Sullivan-esque detailing include the Anderson Apartment Building built in 1924 (NRHP 2009) and the Rose Realty-Securities Building built in 1916 (NRHP 1996), both contemporaries to the Turner Court Apartments built in 1921. The Anderson Apartment building is a three-story mixed use (residential and commercial) brick building with terra cotta detailing. It is similar to the Turner Court Apartments in that the applied terra cotta detailing ornaments a relatively simple brick commercial building. The Rose Realty-Securities Building is a six story commercial office block located at 16<sup>th</sup> and Farnam Streets in Omaha's central business district. The building is concrete construction with limestone and terra cotta sheathing. This building represents Sullivan's method of ornamenting and unifying commercial high rise structures. The building is divided into the classic tripartite unit of the column including a base, shaft, and capital in the façade with the detailed terra cotta ornamentation dividing the base from the shaft.

The popularity of his designs, and the impact he had upon the urban landscape, was recognized and adopted by other architects and designers across the country. The Turner Court Apartments are an example of how simple applied design such as the features on either side of the main entry doors, and the long vertical windows providing light to the main central corridor, can reflect a popular and significant architectural movement. Turner Court was built near the end of Sullivan's life in 1924, but represents his influential impact in the architectural community and how his designs were interpreted and applied to smaller scale projects on the local level.

<sup>13</sup> [www.mit.edu/museum/chicago/sullivan](http://www.mit.edu/museum/chicago/sullivan) accessed 8-2-2014

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*Terrace Court Apartments (the identical complex to the Turner Court) was built in 1920 by Drake Realty and Construction Company at 836-842 Park Avenue. The property was listed in the National Register in 2008. Since their listing in the NRHP the property has undergone renovation outside of the historic tax credit program. This image is prior to renovation.*



*Anderson Apartments at 701 South 24<sup>th</sup> Street in Omaha were built in 1924 with Sullivan-style detailing. The building was listed in the NRHP in 2009*



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*Farnam Building at 1613 Farnam Street in Omaha was built in 1929 with applied Sullivanesque style detailing. The building was listed in the NRHP in 2000*



*Rose Realty-Securities Building located at 16<sup>th</sup> and Farnam Streets in Omaha was built in 1916 and represents a high rise building incorporating the base, shaft, capital form Sullivan applied to his high rise buildings. The building was listed in the NRHP in 1996.*

### Summary

The Turner Court Apartments at 31<sup>st</sup> and Dodge Streets in Omaha represent the growth of the city, the fulfillment of city housing needs during the late teens and early 1920s to provide multiple family residential units to support the growing population, and the achievement of the Drake Realty and Construction Company. The geographic area west of the downtown commercial core provided accessible pedestrian and public transportation systems to the main employment center. Construction of these types of properties was not achieved by individual families building their own residences or even multiple family duplex or triplex buildings. This goal was achieved by the organization, growth, and financial success of construction, realty, and development companies. This growth was not always easy, and the completion of thousands of residential units at the time the Turner Court Apartments was constructed at the height of residential boom years in Omaha

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attests to that with the vocal issues of residents regarding rate heights, safety issues such as the installation and retention of fire escapes, and sanitary conditions. The Turner Court Apartment buildings represent the successful growth of the city's expanding need for apartment complexes and they contribute to the significance of the Drake Realty and Construction Company's impact on the built environment in the City of Omaha.

Under Criterion A this property is a strong example of the designed residential apartment unit constructed to support the expanding city's needs and built by a significant Omaha development company. The period of significance of the property extends from 1921 its date of construction through 1964 since the building has been continually occupied by renters throughout its history. Under Criterion C this property represents the applied ornamentation and design of Sullivanesque style architecture. Turner Court is significant at the local level.

---

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

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**Bibliography** (Insert bibliography here – cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission. *A Comprehensive Program for Historic Preservation in Omaha*. Omaha City Planning Department, Omaha, Nebraska: 1980.

Omaha World Herald various dates:

June 3, 1920, *Drake Court Tenants Vote Refusal to Pay Rent Boost*

July 10, 1920, *Tenants' League Out for 10,000 Members: Not Agreed on Taking Over Apartments: Will Investigate Sanitary Conditions*

June 16, 1921, *Drake Building Flats Worth About Million*

July 9, 1921, Classified Advertisement Identifying Completion, Description, and Rental Availability of the Turner Court Apartments at 31<sup>st</sup> and Dodge Streets

March 18, 1925, *William B. Drake Once Apartment King Bankrupt*

July 27, 1935, *Drake Drops Dead*

Mead and Hunt. *Reconnaissance Survey of Selected Neighborhoods in Omaha*. Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, 2003.

Wakeley, Arthur C. *Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County, Nebraska*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1917.

[www.mit.edu/museum/chicago/sullivan](http://www.mit.edu/museum/chicago/sullivan). Accessed 8-2-2014.

**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 #

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Turner Court Apartments \_\_\_\_\_

Douglas County, NE \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Property**

**County and State**

\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Name of repository)

\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DO09:0212-004

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than one acre USGS Quadrangle Omaha North, NE

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

- |    |          |                  |           |                   |
|----|----------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1. | Latitude | <u>41.259974</u> | Longitude | <u>-95.958167</u> |
| 2. | Latitude | _____            | Longitude | _____             |
| 3. | Latitude | _____            | Longitude | _____             |
| 4. | Latitude | _____            | Longitude | _____             |

**OR**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NAD 1927 or \_\_\_\_\_ NAD 1983

- |    |      |       |         |       |          |       |
|----|------|-------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| 1. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 2. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 3. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 4. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |



Turner Court Apartments  
 Name of Property

Douglas County, NE  
 County and State

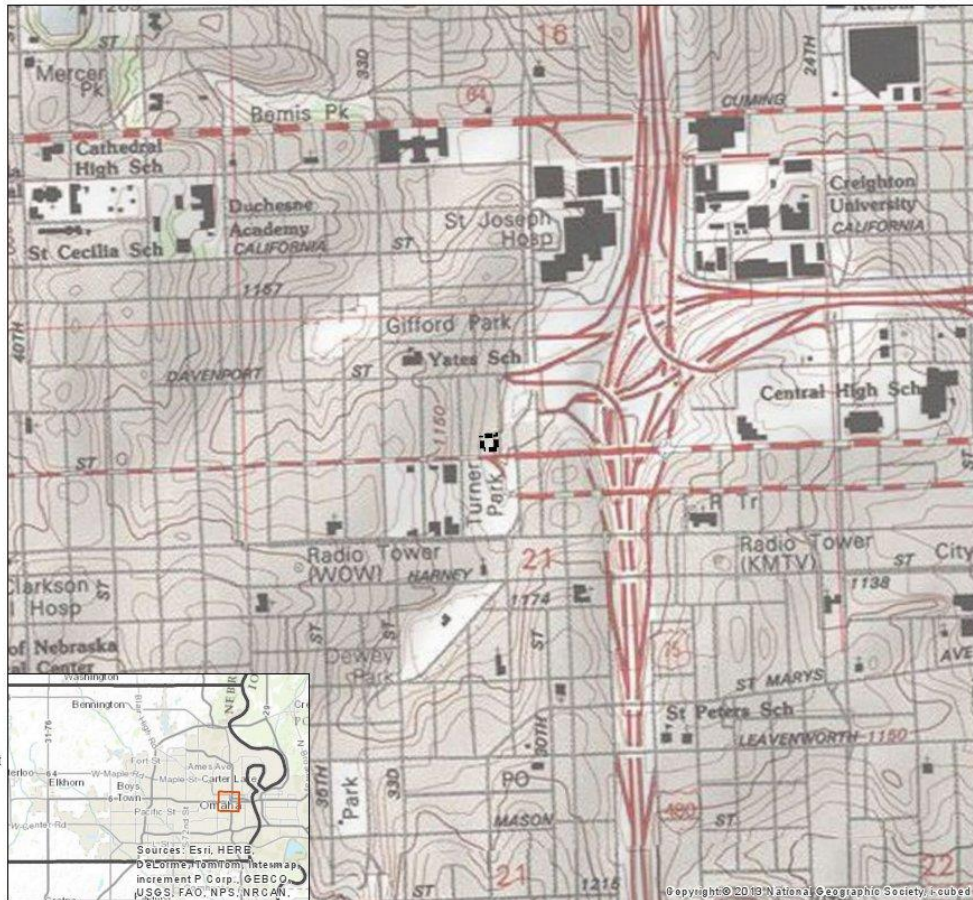
Turner Court Apartments

3106 Dodge St.,  
 Omaha, Douglas Co.,  
 Nebraska

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

41.259974, -95.958167

Datum: WGS84



Legend

Property Boundary

0 235470 940 1,410 1,880 Feet

1:12,000



**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Located at 3106 Dodge Street, the boundary for the Turner Court Apartments includes the legal lot defined by the Douglas County Assessor as, the West end lot 11 block 41/2, vacated alley adjacent, and north 132 feet lots 9 and 10 and north 132 feet east 1/2, 119.57 x 132 feet

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the land historically associated with this property, and defined by the legal lot as identified by the Douglas County Assessor office.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Melissa Dirr Gengler  
 organization Historic Resources Group, Inc. date July 2014  
 street & number 442 South 28<sup>th</sup> Street telephone 402-770-5877  
 city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68510  
 email Melissa@hrg-nebraska.com

Turner Court Apartments

Douglas County, NE

Name of Property

County and State

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

**Turner Court Apartments**

3106 Dodge St.,  
Omaha, Douglas Co.,  
Nebraska

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

41.259974, -95.958167

Datum: WGS84

**Legend**

 Property Boundary

0 55 110 220 330 440 Feet

1:3,000



- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO for any additional items.)

Turner Court Apartments  
**Name of Property**

Douglas County, NE  
**County and State**

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property Turner Court Apartments

City or Vicinity Omaha County Douglas State Nebraska

Photographer MaryAnn Fustos Date Photographed July 13, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

1. View of main (south facing façade), camera facing north
2. Detail view of main façade, camera facing north
3. View of main facades, camera facing northeast
4. View of the east façade along 31<sup>st</sup> Street, camera facing west
5. View of north façade, camera facing southwest
6. Main façade, detail view of entry ornamentation, south façade, camera facing north
7. Main façade entry, camera facing south
8. Interior second floor apartment, showing main living space and bathroom
9. Interior second floor apartment, showing kitchen
10. Interior main level corridor.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



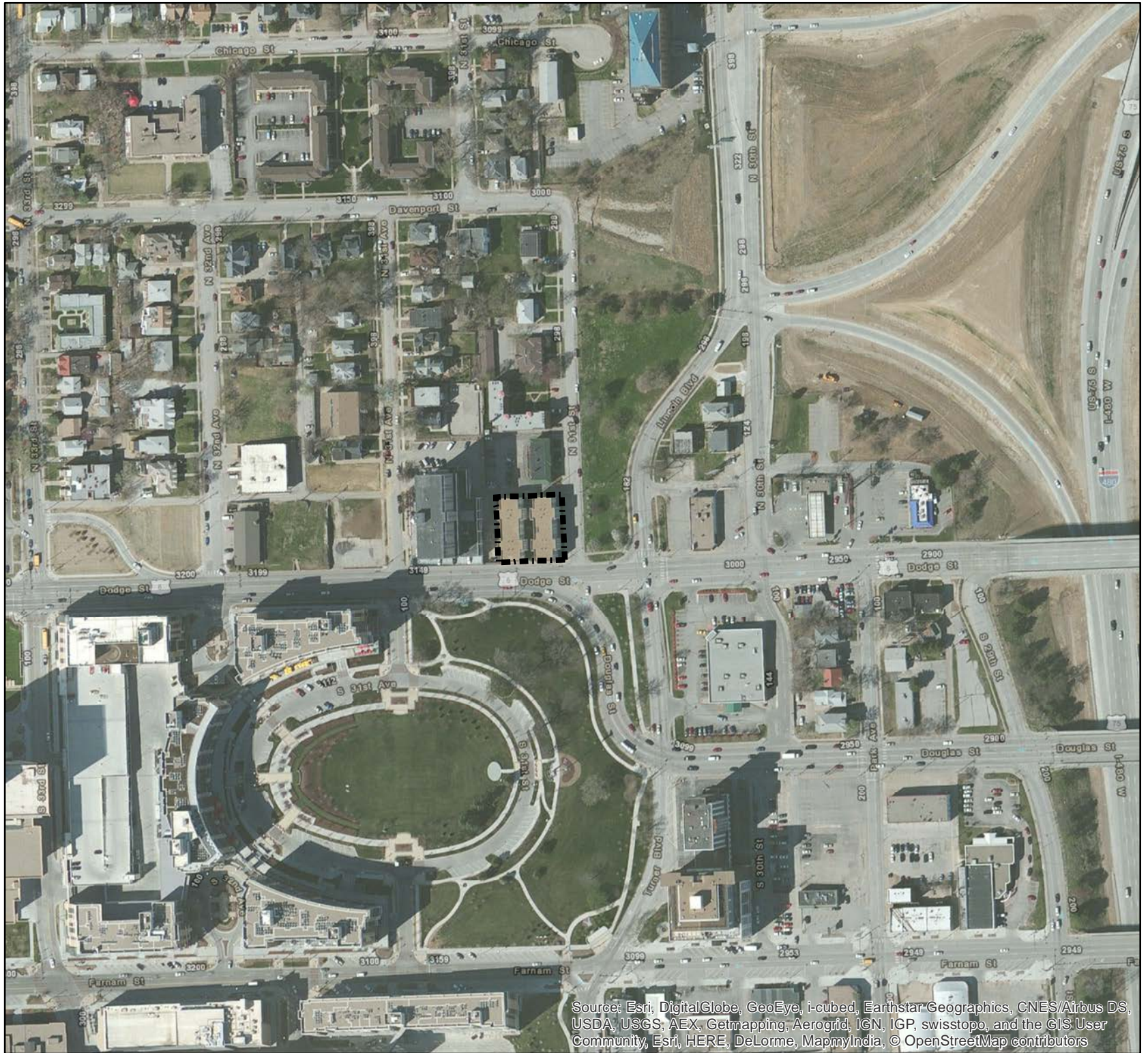
# Turner Court Apartments

3106 Dodge St.,  
Omaha, Douglas Co.,  
Nebraska

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

41.259974, -95.958167

Datum: WGS84



## Legend

 Property Boundary

0 55 110 220 330 440  
Feet

1:3,000



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors



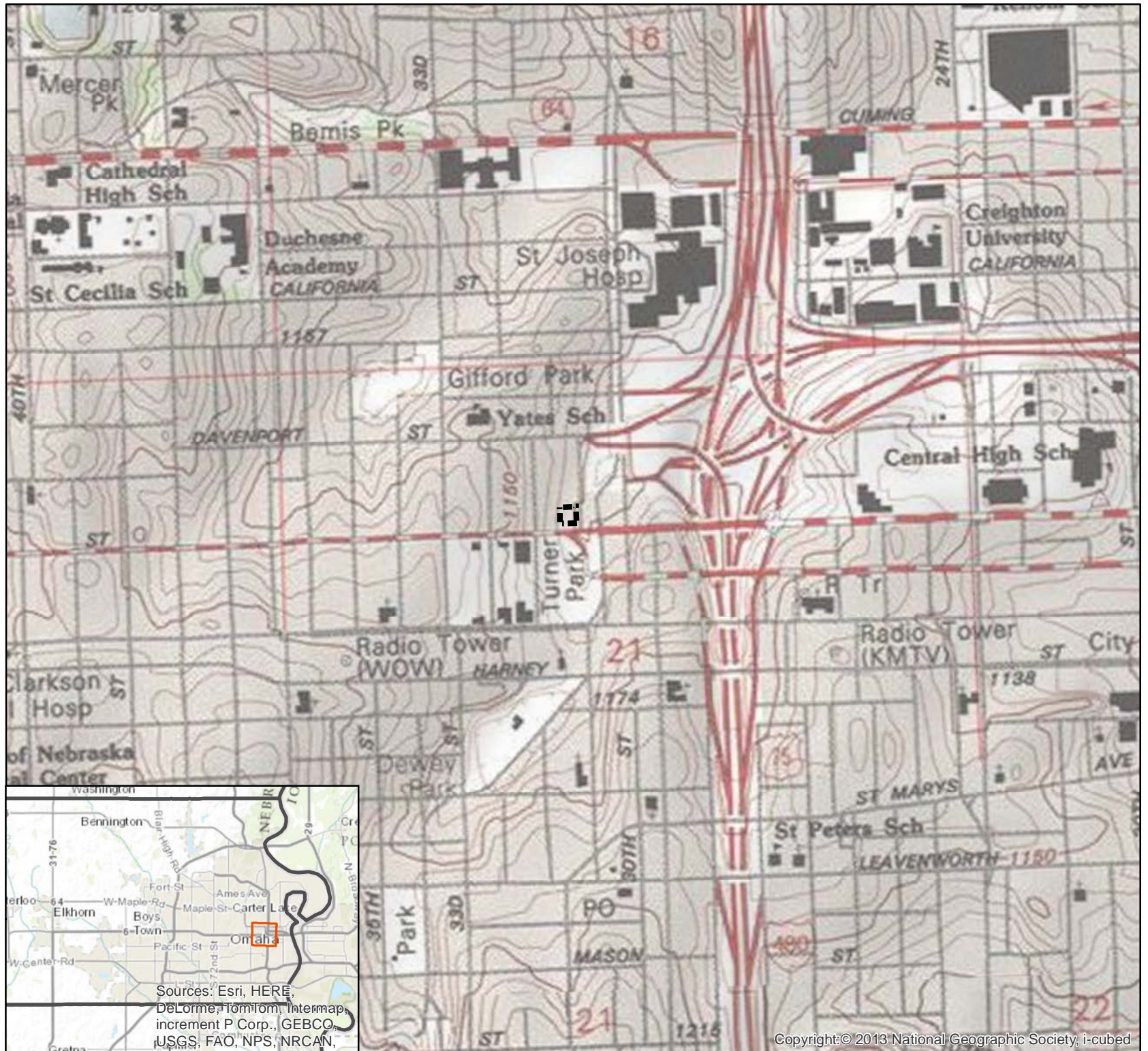
# Turner Court Apartments

3106 Dodge St.,  
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Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:

41.259974, -95.958167

Datum: WGS84



## Legend

 Property Boundary

0 235 470 940 1,410 1,880 Feet

1:12,000



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN,

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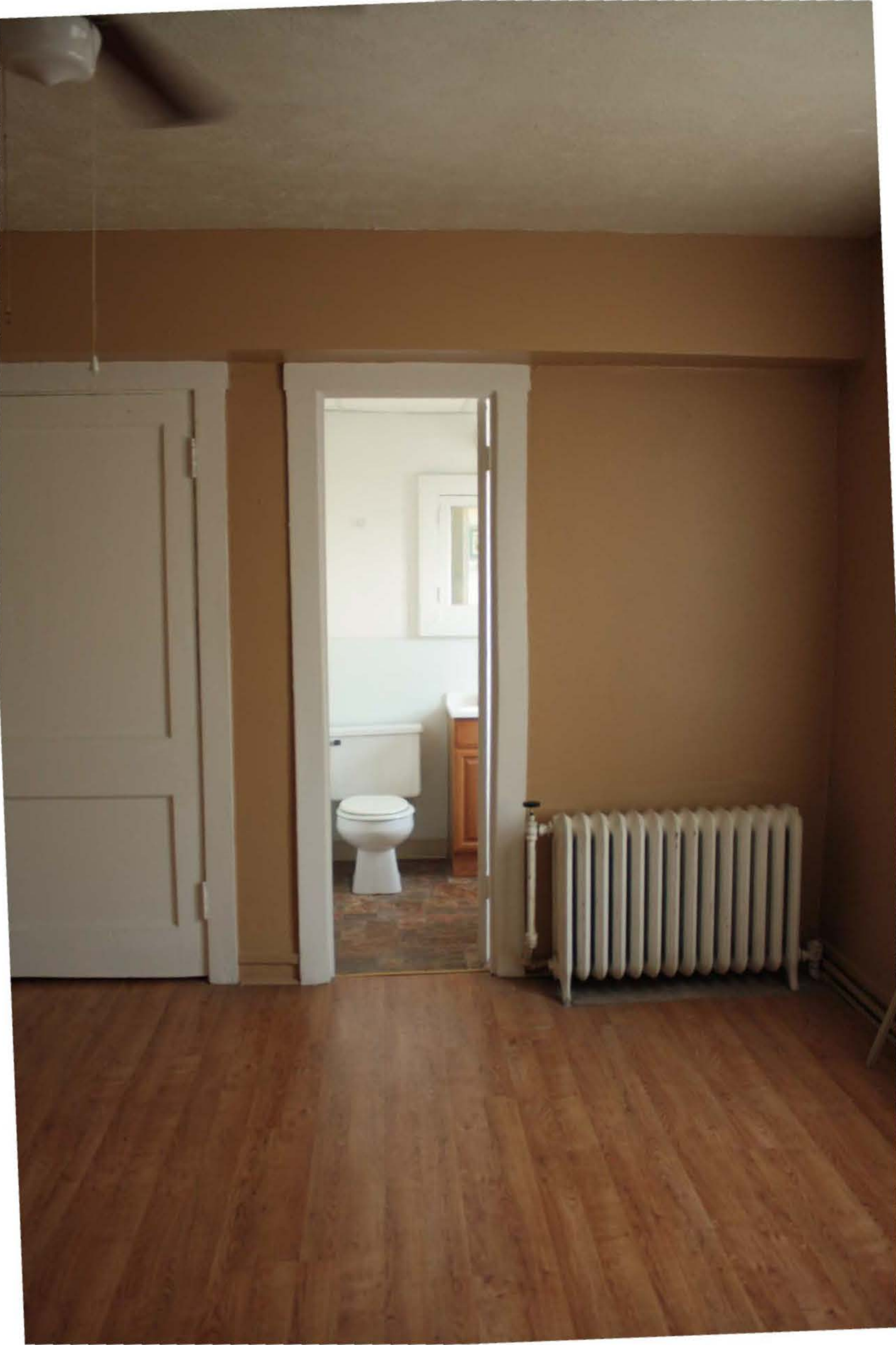






31st











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Turner Court Apartments

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEBRASKA, Douglas

DATE RECEIVED: 9/26/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/12/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000910

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 11-12-2014 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Weak 'A' Argument*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C

REVIEWER J. Gordon DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



September 18, 2014

J. Paul Loether  
National Register—National Historic Landmarks Programs  
National Park Service  
1201 "I" Street NW, 8th Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Turner Court Apartments  
Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the above referenced property to the National Register of Historic Places. This form has met all notification and other requirements as established in 36 CFR 60.

If you have any questions concerning this nomination, please let me know.

Sincerely,

  
L. Robert Puschendorf  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure

1500 R Street  
PO Box 82554  
Lincoln, NE 68501-2554  
p: (800) 833-6747  
(402) 471-3270  
f: (402) 471-3100  
[www.nebraskahistory.org](http://www.nebraskahistory.org)