

**United States Department of 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 *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 Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	100-245 East Main Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town		N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Dane	code 025
			zip code 53590

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.)

David Reubee
Signature of certifying official/Title

4/5/2019
Date

State Historic Preservation Office-Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

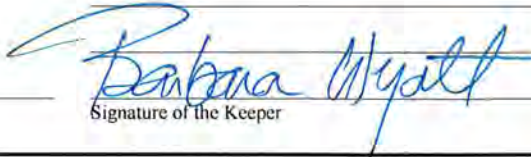
State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

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.
 - See continuation sheet.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

5-21-19
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	26	2 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> site		structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		objects
		26	2 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property 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/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

GOVERNMENT/city hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Romanesque

NeoClassical Revival

Commercial Style

Other: Commercial Vernacular Form

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other STONE

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 the National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture (C)
- Commerce (A)
-
-
-
-

Period of Significance

- 1878-1958 (C)
- 1878-1969 (A)
-

Significant Dates

- N/A
-
-

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

- N/A
-

Cultural Affiliation

- N/A
-

Architect/Builder

- Radway, M. C.
- Nader, John
- Small, Alvan
- Kronenberg, Ferdinand L.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Dane
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

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

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State Agency
 - Federal Agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Sun Prairie Historical Library & Museum

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.7 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 320140 4783340
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

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	Timothy F. Heggland	date	
organization		Telephone	606-795-2650
street & number	6391 Hillsandwood Road	zip code	53560
city or town	Mazomanie	state	WI

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Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

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Description

The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District consists of portions of four city blocks that together form the historic downtown core of the city of Sun Prairie.¹ The district contains twenty-eight buildings, all of which face onto the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Main Street. The district is bounded by North and South Bristol Street to the west, Market/Church Street to the east, and is bisected by King/Columbus Street. Main Street was historically the most important commercial thoroughfare in the city and these twenty-eight buildings constitute a coherent, visually unified grouping that contains most of Sun Prairie's intact nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century commercial buildings.

The first settlers arrived at the future site of Sun Prairie in 1839-1840 because the prairie surrounding it appeared to have great potential as farm land and yet was only some twelve miles from the newly established capital city of Madison. Although a plat of the Village of Sun Prairie was not officially registered until 1868, a town site was nevertheless developed in 1844 by William H. Angell, on five acres he purchased from Charles H. Bird, the first settler of this area. It was on this five-acre site that the future downtown core of the village was established and the first buildings devoted to commerce were built. Angell's town site was divided into north and south halves by an east-west-running thoroughfare that he called Main Street and after Angell established a post-office in a building on this street, new arrivals soon established the other commercial enterprises that were necessary to support the farming activity that was also beginning to occur in the surrounding area. The success of the new community was finally assured when a railroad was established from Milwaukee to Madison via the Baraboo Valley and Watertown. Work on the Watertown and Madison Railroad began in 1859 and the line quickly progressed from Milwaukee to Watertown and then to Sun Prairie, where work halted for the next ten years. As a result, for that ten-year period, Sun Prairie became the western terminus of the railroad, which made it the natural place from which the produce of the surrounding area would be shipped.

Being one of the earliest communities in Dane County to have a railroad connection made Sun Prairie an attractive place to establish businesses of all kinds and the new buildings that housed these businesses were mostly built on lots fronting on Main Street, creating a steadily growing business district. Of the twenty-eight buildings in the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District, two have been evaluated as being non-contributing due to their late date of construction. One of the 26 contributing buildings was built in 1862 but was given a new main façade in 1930; one was built in the 1870s; three more were built in the 1880s; eleven were built between 1891 and 1899; three were built between 1900 and 1910; one was built between 1911 and 1920; two were built between 1921 and 1930; none were built between 1931 and 1940, one was built between 1941 and 1949; and three were built between 1950 and 1958. The contributing buildings range from one to three stories in height, most are either rectangular or square in plan, all are of masonry construction, and all but the former Sun Prairie Public Library built in 1924, and the non-contributing Bank of Sun Prairie, built in stages from 1950 onward, have main façades that abut the inner

¹ The population of Sun Prairie in 2010 was 29,364.

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edges of the cement sidewalks that edge the streets in front of them. The land in the district slopes gently down to the south and the district's buildings were typically positioned immediately adjacent to each other, the only free-standing exceptions being: the building at 120 E. Main Street, the Joseph C. Conrad Block, the former Sun Prairie Public Library, the Robinson & Belda Building, and the Bank of Sun Prairie.

The contributing buildings in the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District are all second generation buildings that have replaced earlier buildings on their respective sites, are constructed of brick, and consist of: 14 Commercial Vernacular form two-story buildings that were built between 1878 and 1914; two two-story Queen Anne style buildings built between in 1896 and 1899; three, one and two-story Twentieth Century Commercial style buildings built between 1910 and 1930; a single fine two-and-one-half-story example of the Romanesque Revival style built in 1895; two fine three-story Neoclassical Revival style buildings built in 1902 and 1909; one fine example of the Georgian Revival style built in 1924; and three, one and two-story Contemporary style buildings built between 1942 and 1958. As is typical of the older commercial buildings in other Wisconsin cities, many of the original first story storefronts have been lost to subsequent modernization. The upper floors of these façades are all largely intact and retain their original decorative brick, wood or metal cornices.

Inventory

The following inventory lists every building in the district along with the names of the original owners, the construction date, the address, and also the resource's contributing (C) or non-contributing (NC) status. The abbreviations given below are for architectural styles as follows:

- COM = Commercial Vernacular
- CON = Contemporary
- GN = Georgian Revival
- NE = Neoclassical
- QU = Queen Anne
- RO = Romanesque Revival
- TC = Twentieth Century Commercial

C	100	E. Main Street	Sun Prairie City Hall	1895	RO
C	101-105	E. Main Street	Hotel Kleiner	1896	QU
C	104	E. Main Street	C. L. Long Block	1899	COM
C	108-110	E. Main Street	A. Johnson Building	1896	COM
C	109	E. Main Street	Robinson & Belda Building	1958	CON
C	112	E. Main Street	F. J. Oehrlein Building	1927	TC
C	114-116	E. Main Street	George Maloney Investment Building	1904	COM
C	115	E. Main Street	Sun Prairie Public Library	1924	GN

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C	120	E. Main Street	Building	1914	COM
C	121	E. Main Street	Joseph C. Conrad Block	1902	NE
C	200-208	E. Main Street	Erhardt Batz Block	1911	TC
C	201-205	E. Main Street	Lohneis-Weisensel Block	1909	NE
C	207	E. Main Street	Roy Weisensel Building	1942	CON
C	209-211	E. Main Street	Charles Britton Block	1899	QU
NC	210	E. Main Street	Building	1977	CON
C	213-215	E. Main Street	Rood-Hillenbrand Building	1862/1930	TC
C	219-221	E. Main Street	B. F. Haberman Building	1896	COM
C	223-225	E. Main Street	George Maloney Block	1878	COM
C	227-229	E. Main Street	A. Johnson Double Block	1898	COM
NC	228	E. Main Street	Bank of Sun Prairie	1955/1972/ 1981/1994	CON
C	231-233	E. Main Street	Thomas C. Hayden Block	1897	COM
C	235-237	E. Main Street	Trapp's Cash Store Building	1897	COM
C	238	E. Main Street	Matthew Dott Building	1891	COM
C	239	E. Main Street	Isaac D. Hayden Building	1897	COM
C	240	E. Main Street	Lebrecht Reddeman Block	1889	COM
C	242	E. Main Street	Dr. L. V. Lewis Drugstore Building	1889	COM
C	243	E. Main Street	Ervin Cain Building	1953	CON
C	245	E. Main Street	John & William Hein/J. F. Dott & Co. Building	1887/1901	COM

The following list describes some of the most characteristic and/or finest resources in the district and tells something of what is known about their history. Names given in the heading are those of the original owners and the buildings are listed in roughly chronological order, grouped by style.

Commercial Vernacular

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
John & William Hein/J. F. Dott & Co. Building	245 E. Main Street	1887/1901

This two-story, four-bay-wide, rectangular plan Commercial Vernacular Form building occupies a corner lot, rests on a stone foundation, has walls of cream brick, and its north-facing main façade is nearly symmetrical in design. The first story of this façade now features a very well-done modern recreation of the original first story storefront. The present nearly full-width four-bay-wide storefront has a large single light store window placed in its left-hand bay, the next bay from the left contains a deeply recessed main entrance that has canted side walls and two two-light-over one panel entrance doors, each of which is surmounted by a single-light transom. This entrance bay is flanked on the right by another large single-light store window. The storefront's right-hand bay contains a single slightly recessed two-light-over-one panel entrance door that provides access to the building's second story, and each of the storefront's four

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bays is enframed by paneled pilasters.² The four-bay-wide second story is original and is highly intact; above is a bracketed sheet metal cornice. The window openings in the four second story bays each have semi-circular-arched corbelled brick lintels placed above them and they each contain a one-over-one-light double hung window.

This building was originally three-bays-wide, and it was built in 1887 by the Hein brothers and housed a general store, while the fourth bay from the left was a separate one-story-brick store building that housed a meat market. In 1901, however, the new owners, J. F. Dott & Co., combined the two buildings, added a second story to the one-story portion, and combined and remodeled the first story storefronts of both buildings, thereby giving the building its current configuration.³

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Dr. Ledyard V. Lewis Drugstore Building	242 E. Main Street	1889

This two-story, two-bay-wide, rectangular plan Commercial Vernacular Form building occupies a corner lot, rests on a stone foundation, has walls of brick painted white, and its south-facing main façade is asymmetrical in design. The first story of this building has a modern storefront that has been inserted between two brick pilasters that still retain some of their original corbelled brick ornamentation. The left-hand side of the storefront consists of a deeply recessed main entrance that contains two single-light entrance doors, the one to the left of which provides access to the second story, while the one to the right provides access to the first story retail space. Placed to the right of the entrance are two large single light store windows, and a single-light transom is placed above each of the store windows and above the entrance bay.

The two-bay-wide second story is original except for the loss of its original bracketed sheet metal cornice. The window openings in the two second story bays each have semi-circular-arched corbelled brick lintels and each contain a one-over-one-light double hung window.

This building was built in 1889 for Dr. Ledyard V. Lewis to house his drugstore and medical office.⁴

² An historic photo shows that the building's original storefront had a large picture window in the left-hand bay, a recessed but narrower main entrance to the right of it, two large store windows to the right of the main entrance, and the right-hand bay contained a second story entrance door. This storefront was later replaced by a modern one in 1955 that had the same configuration as the current one, but which was composed of modern elements. The 1955 storefront was later replaced with the current one, date unknown.

³ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: February 4, 1901, p. 5; March 28, 1901, p. 5; September 12, 1901, p. 5; January 9, 1902, p. 5. See also: Fire Insurance Maps of Sun Prairie. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1894, 1899.

⁴ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: January 2, 1890, p. 5.

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<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Trapp's Cash Store Building	235-237 E. Main Street	1897

This two-story, three-bay-wide, rectangular plan Commercial Vernacular Form building rests on a stone foundation, has walls of cream brick, and its north-facing main façade is asymmetrical in design. The first story of this building has a storefront that is inserted between two narrow brick pilasters. The left-hand side of this story contains a modern entrance door that provides access to the building's second story and the original transom light above it has now been replaced with a modern one-over-one-light window. The storefront to the right consists of a deeply recessed main entrance that contains a single-light modern entrance door and placed to the right and left of this entrance are two large single light store windows, the upper parts of which have now been covered over with clapboards, as have the bulkheads below the windows. These elements are all still enframed by the storefront's original thin, fluted and ornamented cast iron columns, which help support the narrow cast iron lintel that spans the width of the storefront.

The three-bay-wide second story is original and retains its bracketed sheet metal cornice. The window openings in the three second story bays each have segmental-arched brick lintels placed above them and they each contain a one-over-one-light double-hung window.

This building was built in 1897 for Charles A. Trapp to house his general store.⁵

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Isaac D. Hayden Hardware Store Building	239 E. Main Street	1897

This highly intact two-story, four-bay-wide, rectangular plan Commercial Vernacular Form building rests on a stone foundation, has walls of cream brick, and its north-facing main façade is symmetrical in design. The first story of this building has a storefront that is inserted between two wide brick pilasters. The storefront consists of a centered, deeply recessed and canted main entrance that contains a pair of single-light modern entrance doors, above which is positioned a modern one-light transom. Placed to the right and left of this entrance are two large single light store windows and all these elements are all still enframed by the storefront's original narrow, fluted and ornamented cast iron columns, which help support the cast iron lintel that spans the width of the storefront and which is decorated with cast iron rosettes.

The four-bay-wide second story is also largely intact, and is the most heavily ornamented of any in the district. The window openings in the four second story bays each have massive flat, rock-faced stone lintels placed above them and narrow stone sills below and three of them still contain their original wood sash, one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. On the wall surface above these windows are three panels filled with multiple courses of dog-tooth course red bricks, and the façade retains its elaborate

⁵ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: March 11, 1897, p. 5; July 29, 1897, p. 5; August 12, 1897, p. 5; December 9, 1897, p. 5.

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bracketed and corbelled sheet metal cornice that has a pediment centered on and above it that bears the word "HARDWARE."

This building was built in 1897 for Isaac D. Hayden to house his hardware store.⁶

Romanesque Revival Style

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Sun Prairie City Hall	100 E. Main Street	1895

The city hall that was built by the village in 1895 is the most prominent and the most architecturally distinctive building in the district.⁷ This Romanesque Revival style building was intended to house multiple uses including the village offices, fire station, jail, a public auditorium, and meeting rooms. It occupies a prominent corner lot that gives it two principal façades: one facing south onto E. Main Street and the other facing west onto N. Bristol Street. The building is two-and-one-half-stories, has a rectangular plan, stone foundation walls that encloses a full basement story, and exterior walls of cream brick; these walls are sheltered by a tall, steeply pitched gable roof whose ridgeline runs north-south.

The asymmetrical principal façade faces south onto E. Main Street, is three-bays wide, and is dominated by a three-story square-plan corner tower that occupies the left third of the façade. The south-facing side of this tower contains a single broad semi-circular-arched window in its first story that has a sandstone sill and a semi-circular-arched corbelled brick lintel above. This opening now contains a fixed single-light window, but historic photos show that it originally held a four-light window instead. The second story above contains a pair of window openings that have a sandstone sill and lintel, and the third story contains what is now a flat-roofed wooden bell chamber that has arched openings on three of its four sides.⁸ The middle and right-hand bays of this façade both repeat the same design that is found in the first two stories of the tower's bay, except that the first story opening of the right-hand bay contains the building's semi-circular-arched main entrance rather than a window. The two right-hand bays are then crowned by the south-facing gable end of the main roof, which features a group of four small semi-circular-arched one-over-one-light windows in its attic story that are linked together by semi-circular-arched corbelled brick lintels, and uppermost portion of the gable end just below the roof is outlined by a semi-circular-arched brick corbel table.

⁶ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: April 8, 1897, p. 5; July 7, 1897, p. 5; July 29, 1897, p. 5; August 12, 1897, p. 5; August 19, 1897, p. 5; November 4, 1897, p. 1; November 25, 1897, p. 5.

⁷ The building's main facade bears a plaque calling it a CITY HALL, but its designation as a "city" hall was somewhat premature since Sun Prairie was not actually incorporated as a city until 1958.

⁸ Historic photos show that the roof of the bell chamber was originally steeply pitched and pyramidal-shaped, but this feature was removed many years ago.

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The asymmetrical west-facing side elevation of the building is four-bays-wide, and the right-hand bay is the tower and it is identical in design to the other side of the tower that faces south. The second bay from the right contains two tall, separate, flat-arched window openings in both its first and second stories. The third bay from the right has two more of these flat-arched windows in its first story and also a small entrance door opening, its second story contains two more of these windows, and it is crowned by a gable-roofed wall dormer that has a pair of semi-circular-arched one-over-one-light windows placed in its attic story and has a squared off corbel table outlining the dormer's roof. The fourth bay from the right has three tall, separate, flat-arched window openings, but the first story below them that originally contained the two arched door openings that served the fire station have now been replaced by a modern brick and glass block storefront instead, which is the only modern alteration to the building.

The construction of the City Hall was a source of great pride to what was then a community of just 900 and a description of it that was printed just as work on the building began gives what is still a good description of the building even today.

The building is designed by M. C. Radway, of Ripon, who has achieved an enviable reputation as an architect. It will occupy a ground area of 35 by 80 feet and will be surmounted at the Main and Bristol street corner by a tower 65 feet in height. It will be built of white brick with Lake Superior red sandstone trimmings. It will have a gable roof and a gable will also appear on the west side. The entire interior will be substantially finished in hardwood. Work has already begun on the building which is to cost \$8,000 when completed. The excavation for the basement, which will extend under the entire structure, has already been completed. In the rear of the basement will be a 900 barrel cistern which will undoubtedly furnish a sufficient water supply for any fire liable to occur in this part of the town.

The first floor will be divided into three distinct apartments. In the front will be the council room, 23x35 feet, where the village board will hold its sessions, where elections will be held and such other business transacted as may be deemed advisable. Just back of this room will be the cells, vault, etc. This space will occupy 18x20 feet. In the rear will be a room for the fire engine, hook and ladder trucks and hose cart. The entire upper floor will be used for a public hall which will both a front and a rear entrance. The ceilings in the lower rooms will be 12 feet high and in the second story 13 feet.⁹

⁹ *Sun Prairie Countryman*. July 18, 1895, p. 5 (illustrated). See also: *Sun Prairie Countryman*: March 7, 1895, p. 4; November 28, 1915, p. 5 (illustrated).

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This building served Sun Prairie as its Village Hall until 1956, when a new municipal building was constructed. Since then it has been in private ownership and has served many different uses.

Queen Anne Style

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Hotel Kleiner	101-105 E. Main Street	1896

This building is now the only one in Sun Prairie that was purposely built as a hotel in the nineteenth century. The Hotel Kleiner was built in 1896, occupies a corner lot, and consists of two portions: a rectangular plan flat-roofed two-story main block that housed the hotel, and a shorter multi-gable-roofed rear wing that housed the hotel kitchen and living quarters. Both portions rest on stone foundation walls and the hotel block and the west-facing side elevation of the rear wing are both of cream brick, while the rest of the rear wing was originally clapboards and is now covered with asphalt shingles. The first story of the main block contains two commercial spaces and the principal façade of the main block of the building faces north onto E. Main Street and it is five-bays-wide. The original first story of this façade has now been completely replaced with a modern storefront that is faced in limestone veneer and there is a deeply inset entrance door in the storefront's left-hand bay that opens into one of the commercial space inside, while next to it in the second bay from the left are two large single-light store windows that also serve this space. An entrance door that serves the block's second story is located in the third bay from the left, a second entrance door that serves the other first story commercial space is located in the fourth bay from the left, and the fifth bay contains another large single-light store window.¹⁰

The second story of the main façade is largely intact and contains four segmental-arched window openings, each of which has a corbelled brick lintel. These windows occupy the three left-hand bays and the right-hand bay, while the fourth bay from the left contains a wide three-sided oriel bay window. The entire façade is then finished with a projecting wood cornice.

The first story of the west-facing side elevation of the hotel's main block and its rear wing are both sheltered by an open, one-story, gable and flat-roofed porch that is supported by stucco-clad piers. This porch is a later replacement for the original first story porch in this same location that had a hip roof supported by turned wood posts. The west-facing elevation of the main block is four-bays-wide, its second story also contains four segmental-arched window openings, each of which has a corbelled brick lintel, and has a projecting wood cornice, while the second story of the west-facing elevation of

¹⁰ Historic photos show that the first story of this façade originally had a separate storefront to the left that contained a recessed entrance that was flanked on either side by single store windows, and an entrance door to the second story was located next to it to the right. A second entrance door that was flanked on either side by a separate segmental-arched window was placed to the right of the second story entrance and this door and these windows served the hotel lobby inside.

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the rear wing is just two-bays-wide with each bay containing a single flat-arched one-over-one-light window.

The Hotel Kleiner was built for J. E. Kleiner to a design supplied by Madison architect John Nader and constructed by Frank Stegerwald, Sr., who then lived in East Bristol, Wisconsin. The hotel had a number of different owners and names while it was in use as a hotel. Its first story retail space housed the Sun Prairie post office until a new post office building (non-extant) was built in 1910.¹¹

Neo-Classical Style

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Joseph C. Conrad Block	121 E. Main Street	1902

The Neoclassical style-inspired Joseph C. Conrad Block is three-stories-tall, rectangular in plan, and free-standing in design, and it occupies a prominent corner lot and has principal façades that face north onto E. Main Street and east onto King Street. The building has a stone foundation and exterior walls that are of orange brick on the two principal façades and cream brick on the west-facing side elevation and the south-facing rear elevation. These exterior walls are devoid of ornamentation until the tall brick cornice at the top of the two main façades, where a narrow terra cotta band decorated with a leaf and dart design is placed below another, wider terra cotta band composed of dentils, and placed below a cove molding. Despite being 116 years old, the building has a surprisingly modern appearance, thanks mainly to the fact that its northeast corner is round rather than square.

Most of the first story of the asymmetrically designed thirty-foot-wide E. Main Street façade of the building consists of a storefront that covers most of the Main Street façade before turning the building's curved northeast corner and terminating on King Street. This storefront consists of four large openings, there being one on the King Street elevation, one on the corner, and two on the Main Street elevation. Four modern floor-to-ceiling single-light windows now fill the King Street and Main Street openings while the corner opening contains the angled and recessed main entrance to the building, and each of these openings is still enframed by the storefront's three heavy original cast iron columns, which support the cast iron lintel that runs along the top of the storefront but is now covered over with corrugated aluminum or steel sheeting. Placed in the second story above the storefront on the Main Street façade is a single flat-arched window opening placed to the left of a pair of identical window openings, and there are two slightly smaller windows of identical design in the third story above, all of which have dressed stone sills and dressed stone splayed lintels, and all of which now contain modern one-over-one-light windows that are very similar to the original windows.

¹¹ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: February 20, 1896, p. 5; February 27, 1896, p. 5; April 2, 1896, p. 5; May 21, 1896, p. 5; May 28, 1896, p. 5; July 9, 1896, p. 5.

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The building's asymmetrical east-facing King Street façade is 90-feet-long, and its first story is nine-bays-wide with the first, second, sixth, and eight bays from the left each containing door openings that access either a first floor or upper story space. The remaining bays contain single window openings that are identical to but taller than the upper story windows on the main façade that were described previously. This elevation's second story is twelve-bays-wide, and each bay contains a single window opening of the type described earlier and the third story contains seven window openings of this type.

The Conrad Block cost \$15,000 and was the first three-story commercial building to be built in Sun Prairie and its construction was seen as being something of a harbinger of the Sun Prairie to come.

The building is the most costly and handsome private pile in the village and will be an ornament when Sun Prairie is many times larger than it is today.¹²

Joseph C. Conrad built the building to house a restaurant and bowling alleys in the first story, office suites in the second story, and a dance hall in the third story. The building was constructed by Frank Stegerwald, Sr.¹³

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Lohneis-Weisensel Block	201-205 E. Main Street	1909

The Neoclassical style-inspired Lohneis-Weisensel Block is very similar to the Conrad Block located just across King Street, but it is somewhat larger. This building is also three-stories and rectangular in plan, and it also occupies a prominent corner lot and has principal façades that in this case face north onto E. Main Street and west onto King Street. Other identical features include having a stone foundation and exterior walls of orange brick on the two principal façades and cream brick on the east-facing side elevation and the south-facing rear elevation. In addition, this building's exterior walls are devoid of ornamentation until the tall brick cornice of the two main façades, which in this case consists of a wide sheet metal band composed of dentils placed below a projecting cyma-recta ogee molding. Like the Conrad Building, this one also has a surprisingly modern appearance, thanks again to the fact that its northwest corner is rounded rather than squared.

Most of the first story of the asymmetrically designed 48-foot-wide E. Main Street façade of the building consists of two modern storefront that once served two separate retail spaces inside the building that have since been reunited into a single space. The left-hand of these two storefronts consists of a very large window opening that contains four large, modern, single-light store windows, and to the right of them is a deeply inset entrance door opening that is an integral part of this

¹² *Sun Prairie Countryman*. December 4, 1902, p. 5.

¹³ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: August 1, 1901, p. 5; March 20, 1902, p. 5; April 4, 1902, p. 7; April 17, 1902, p. 5; July 17, 1902, p. 5; December 4, 1902, p. 5.

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storefront. The right-hand storefront also consists of a very large window opening that contains four large, modern, single-light store windows, and the two storefronts are separated from one another by a deeply inset entrance whose door serves the upper stories of the building. The main entrance to the building is set deep into the building's curved northeast-facing corner and to the right of this entrance is another large window opening on the King Street side elevation of the building that contains two large, modern, one-light picture windows. All of these first story elements are now enframed by wall surfaces that have been stuccoed over and this wall and storefront treatment has also been extended eastward across the main façade of the one-story Contemporary style building next door located at 207 E. Main Street, which was built in 1942 and was also first owned by the Weisensel family.

Placed in the second story above the storefronts on the Main Street façade are two multi-window groups, the left-hand one of which contains four single window openings, while the right-hand one contains three single window openings, all of which have dressed stone sills and dressed stone flat lintels, and all of which now contain modern one-over-one-light windows that are very similar to the building's original windows.

The third story of this façade is treated in much the same way with a group of four single windows to the left and three to the right, the principal difference being that this story's window openings have segmental arch openings and have splayed brick lintels ornamented with stone voussoirs.

The first story of the building's longer, asymmetrical, 94-foot-long west-facing King Street façade was originally five bays-wide and had door openings in its right-hand bay, but today – all of the original openings in this story have been bricked shut and a new side entrance has been created in the second bay from the right. This elevation's second story is nine-bays wide and it contains a mix of larger and smaller window openings, some of which are paired and some of which are single, and all of which contain double-hung one-over-one-light windows, while the third story above is eight-bays-wide and each bay contains a single segmental-arched window opening of the kind that is found on the main façade.

The Weisensel and Lohenis families were related by marriage and this building housed the Weisensel's clothing business. This building was also constructed by Frank Stegerwald & Son.¹⁴

¹⁴ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: July 1, 1909 p. 5; September 16, 1909, p. 6; November 25, 1909, p. 5; December 30, 1909, p. 5. A modern two-story addition was later built across the rear elevations of both 201-205 and 207 E. Main Street

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Twentieth Century Commercial Style

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Erhardt Batz Block	200-208 E. Main Street	1911

The Twentieth Century Commercial style Batz Block is a triple store building that occupies a corner lot and it has a polygonal plan, is two-stories, has a poured concrete foundation, and exterior walls of brick. The principle façade faces south onto E. Main Street, but its corner location also gives it a second important façade that faces west onto Columbus Street. The building's unified appearance suggests that the building was built at the same time, but its history is quite different. There were already three separate buildings located on this corner in 1909, when Erhardt Batz acquired them and set about the process of rebuilding and modernizing them.

Within a week or so workmen will begin the razing of the old red brick building, the popular hostelry known as the old Sun Prairie House, and one of the land marks of Sun Prairie will soon give place to a new and modern business block.

Erhardt Batz purchased the property last fall together with the block now occupied by the Palace Meat Market, and soon after contemplated the erection of a modern building which is now assured. This new building will have a frontage of 52 feet and 80 feet deep. The building occupied by the Palace market will also be remodeled and the front portion will be converted into a bank building and will be owned and occupied by the Farmers & Merchants Bank. This block will be merged with the new one, so that when completed there in effect will be but one block. The bank will occupy the corner, the center rooms will be fitted up for a meat market, and the east apartment, for a store building. It will be two stories high, and the entire front of the corner building will be rebuilt and the first floor lowered to near the street level.¹⁵

To achieve all this, Batz hired Madison architect Ferdinand L. Kronenberg to design the new building and contracted with Frank Stegerwald & Son to build it. Work began soon thereafter and it was followed closely by the local newspaper.

Workmen have during the past week taken own the front of the old Palace meat market building, preparatory to the remodeling of the same. When the front is rebuilt it will conform to the fronts of the structures in the process of construction at the sides of it. Carpenters have commenced laying the floor joist of the first floor and the masons will commence on the brick work soon.¹⁶

¹⁵ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: May 5, 1910, p. 5.

¹⁶ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: August 11, 1910, 5.

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By February of 1911 the new bank and meat market quarters had been readied for occupancy and what by then was essentially a new building was ready for business.¹⁷

The main façade of the building faces south onto E. Main Street and its first story consists of three separate storefronts while the second story above is thirteen-bays-wide, with each of these bays containing a single flat-arched window opening that is enframed in dressed stone, has a stone sill, and contains a one-over-one-light double-hung window. Each of the three storefronts below have been somewhat altered over time, but originally the two right-hand storefronts consisted of deeply recessed centered entrances that were flanked by large single light store windows on either side, while the left-hand storefront that was occupied by the bank had a recessed corner entrance, to the right of which was placed a single large one-light store window. In addition, a deeply recessed entrance was also located in between the two right-hand storefronts and provided access to the second story.

Over time, the left-hand storefront lost its corner entrance and it now has a modern storefront that has three single-light store windows placed to the left of a deeply recessed entrance. The other two storefronts, however, still retain their original layouts although the original elements that made up each of these storefronts have now been replaced with later ones of similar design.

Georgian Revival Style

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Sun Prairie Public Library	115 E. Main Street	1924

The former Sun Prairie Public Library is a freestanding building with a symmetrical principal façade that faces north onto E. Main Street and is set back from the sidewalk that edges the street in front of it and it is surrounded by mown lawns. This one-story Georgian Revival style building has a rectangular plan, a poured concrete foundation that encloses a raised basement story, exterior walls of red brick, and it is sheltered by a hipped main roof clad in tiles, surmounted by a small octagonal lantern. The north-facing main façade is five bays-wide and the main entrance is located in the center bay and it is accessed by ascending three concrete steps that lead up to the raised floor of the projecting pedimented portico that shelters the entrance. The entrance itself consists of a six-light-over-two-panel entrance door that is flanked by three-light side lights and crowned by a multi-light fan light. Placed to the left and right of this entrance are two small six-light windows, and both the entrance and these two windows are sheltered by a projecting portico whose gable roof is supported by four tall, narrow, fluted columns having Corinthian Order-inspired capitals and by two engaged columns of the same design that are attached to the main wall surface behind. Each of the four remaining bays (two on

¹⁷ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: September 16, 1909, p. 5; April 14, 1910, p. 7; May 5, 1910, p. 5; June 23, 1910, p. 5; August 11, 1910, p. 5; December 8, 1910, p. 7; December 29, 1910, p. 5; January 5, 1911, p. 5; February 2, 1911, p. 5.

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each side of the portico) contains a single large fifteen-light flat-arched window and these windows have dressed stone sills and splayed brick lintels that are ornamented with stone voussoirs.

This building was designed by Madison architect and Sun Prairie native Alvan E. Small, who is now best known for his fine Prairie Style residential designs but who clearly had a solid grounding in the period revival style designs that became fashionable after World War I.¹⁸ This building also still retains its highly intact original interior. The building is owned by the City and is no longer the public library; it is currently the Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum. The City constructed a new library in 1967.

Contemporary Style

<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
Ervin Cain Building	243 E. Main Street	1953

This Contemporary style building is one of the last buildings built in the district during the period of significance (1878-1958) and it is a fine example of early 1950s design. The building is two stories, rectangular in plan, and has a poured concrete foundation, and its essentially symmetrical main façade faces north onto E. Main Street. The first story of this façade is three-bays-wide and its center bay contains a pair of one-light, metal-framed entrance doors that are flanked on either side by a large storefront that contains two large one-light store windows. The wall surface that frames these elements is clad with limestone veneer. Limestone veneer also covers the full height piers at both ends of the façade. The three-bay-wide second story above is finished with vertical boards and has a small pair of one-light casement windows centered on it, while placed to the left and right of them are two large window openings that each contain a pair of one-light casement windows and a much larger one-light picture window.

What makes this building special is the fact that this entire façade is actually placed at an angle to sidewalk and to the street. While the left-hand (east) end of the façade abuts the sidewalk, the right-hand end is actually recessed some five-feet in from the sidewalk. In addition, what at first appears to be a broad metal-clad lintel that spans the width of the façade above the first story storefront actually runs straight across the façade's width parallel to the sidewalk and not parallel with the canted façade. As a result, what appears at first to be a lintel actually becomes a sheltering roof at the recessed west end of the façade and the same is true for the cornice that crowns the façade. The result is a dynamic addition to the district's streetscape and this simple expedient made something special out of a design that would otherwise have been more routine.

This building was built for Ervin Cane in 1953 and housed a women's wear store and a beauty shop.

¹⁸ *Sun Prairie Countryman*: May 8, 1924, p. 1; May 22, 1924, p. 1; June 24, 1924, p. 5; December 11, 1924, p. 1.

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Integrity

The buildings in this district display a good degree of integrity for buildings of this vintage and type. While many of these buildings have now had their first story storefronts remodeled, a number still retain original cast iron elements or other original features and some of those that have been remodeled could easily be restored to their original appearance. Second stories have fared better and while window replacements are common, for the most part the replacement windows respect the appearance and size of those they replaced. These buildings are well maintained and the downtown is still heavily used; vacant storefronts are few. At the moment, a number of the buildings at the west end of the district are recovering from the effects of the large accidental gas explosion that occurred on July 10, 2018, which destroyed six buildings in the 100 block of W. Main Street that would otherwise have been included within the district boundaries and which also, tragically, claimed the life of one of the building's owners. Many of the buildings in the district lost windows and sustained other damage but are being repaired, and it is expected that eventually these buildings will be returned to good condition.

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Significance

The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District contains an intact historic streetscape of Victorian period and early Twentieth Century commercial buildings that constitute the historic business center of the city of Sun Prairie. Individually, the buildings in the district are of architectural significance because they are good representative examples of the Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, Neoclassical Revival, Twentieth Century Commercial, and Georgian Revival styles, and of Commercial Vernacular form design. Collectively, however, the buildings in the district have a significance that is even greater than the merit they possess individually because surviving streetscapes of such buildings are rapidly nearing extinction in the changing economic and social reality that characterizes the downtowns of Wisconsin's cities today. Listing this district in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) offers a good opportunity to recognize another of Wisconsin's intact historic downtowns. In addition, the buildings in the district are of local significance to the history of commerce in Sun Prairie because they are not just the most intact group of surviving historic buildings associated with the community's historic retail stores and other service-oriented commercial enterprises; they constitute a large percentage of *all* the buildings in Sun Prairie that were ever associated with this city's retail and professional history prior to the end of World War II.

The proposed Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District was first identified as a potential historic district in an architecture and history highway study prepared for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).¹⁹ This study evaluated the district as having potentially local significance under both National Register Criterion A (History) and Criterion C (Architecture). Research as part of this nomination process confirms this eligibility. The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District is locally significant under National Register Criterion C as an architecturally significant collection of historic commercial buildings that together constitute a well-defined and visually distinct geographic and historic entity. This research also found that the district is eligible for listing under National Register Criterion A, because its buildings are the intact physical embodiment of the commercial history of Sun Prairie.

Commerce

The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (History) for its local significance in the area of Commerce; its buildings comprise the largely intact historic commercial core of the city. The district contains 26 mostly two-story, masonry construction, mid-to-late nineteenth and early-to-mid-twentieth century contributing buildings that line both sides of the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Main Street. These buildings are an important part of

¹⁹ Miller, Elizabeth L. Main Street Historic District, Determination of Eligibility Form. Madison, Wisconsin, 1999. On file at the Division of Historic Preservation, Wisconsin Historical Society.

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the commercial life of the city today and represent a large proportion of all the buildings that were ever built in this city to serve the retail and professional needs of its citizens during the historic period.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for history begins in 1878, the date of construction of the oldest building in the district and representing the start of commercial activity. This area continues to be an important center of commerce in the city; therefore, the end date for the period of significance uses the National Register program's 50-year rule, and concludes in 1969.

Sun Prairie is one of the oldest settled places in Dane County, having been settled as early as 1839. The story of the naming of this place is part of the folklore of the county and involves some of the county's earliest residents. The decision of the first Wisconsin territorial assembly to locate the permanent seat of the future state government at Madison resulted in Augustus A. Bird being elected acting commissioner for the erection of suitable buildings for the assembly and for the officers of the territorial government. On May 26, 1837, Bird began the overland trek from Milwaukee to Madison seventy miles to the west with a crew of 45 men, including his brother, Charles H. Bird. The nine-day's journey was made miserable by constant rain and an almost total lack of sunshine.

At length, as they emerged on the borders of the beautiful prairie, about two miles east of where the village of Sun Prairie now [1877] stands, the sun shown forth in all its brightness, and illuminated the scene before them as with a halo of glory. The contrast which this beautiful vision presented to the gloom with which they had been surrounded was so great, that they greeted it with a shout, and almost involuntarily bivouacked upon its borders, christening the locality "Sun Prairie," which name they carved into an oak tree which stood near by; and for many years this tree bore upon its breast, in rude letters, the inscription "Sun Prairie."²⁰

Two years later, Charles Bird returned to this spot and built a residence there, becoming the first settler of the future township and village of Sun Prairie. Bird organized the township of Sun Prairie in 1839, which initially included all that land that now constitutes Sun Prairie, York, Medina and Bristol townships. Bird spent his first year alone, but in 1840 he was joined by Thomas Marks and 1841 saw the arrival of seven more families. The next few years saw still more families arrive. "In the year 1844, William H. Angell purchased five acres of land from Mr. Bird, being the first lot of ground sold in the present village of Sun Prairie. The idea was then conceived of founding here a village. The first

²⁰ Crosse, Dr. C. G. "Sun Prairie." Included in: *Madison, Dane County and Surroundings*. Madison: Wm. J. Parks & Co., 1877, pp. 313-327. This excerpt is on p. 314.

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step taken was to secure a post office."²¹ The original name chosen was Rome, but this was replaced about a year later with that of Sun Prairie. William H. Angell was the new postmaster and his first term in that office lasted until 1850.

Coinciding with the development of Sun Prairie was the settlement of the surrounding territory by the area's first farmers. Within a few years Sun Prairie was ringed with farms and the small crossroads settlements of Deansville, North and East Bristol, and Pierceville, sprang up to serve them. Gradually, an agricultural district developed with Sun Prairie at its core. This circumstance bolstered the growth of the young village and was the foundation upon which its commercial enterprises and future growth in the village was built.

The first regular attempt at merchandising was in the fall of 1845, Edwin Brayton opening a small stock of goods in the building erected by Mr. Angell for his carpenter shop. Mr. Brayton continued to do business for about one year. In June, 1848, Silas Smith came to the place and rented the place formerly occupied by Mr. Brayton, and opened a stock of general merchandise. Fredrick Starr was successor to Mr. Smith, and after a brief business career, the former was followed by Thomas White. In 1859, White was succeeded by William & Maloney, who soon established a successful trade, of which George Maloney is the present [1880] representative. Patrick Doyle was the first "village smith," and opened his shop here in the fall of 1846.²²

Others started the various small retail and service enterprises that were features of village life of that day: a school was built as early as 1842, Methodist and Congregational churches were built, and both the Angell's Tavern, later called the American House hotel (non-extant) and the Sun Prairie House hotel (non-extant) were established in 1850. Gradually, Sun Prairie took on the appearance of a typical small rural distribution center of that day and it might have continued like this indefinitely but for the ambition of its settlers and the coming of the railroad.

In the year 1859, a line of railroad having been projected from Milwaukee to the Baraboo Valley was completed as far as Watertown. The line was located and graded about three miles south of the village of Sun Prairie; but the route was afterward changed; and on the 24th day of September, 1859, the railroad was completed to the last mentioned place. Then followed a period of active business prosperity, and apparently a golden opportunity for building up, on a permanent basis, a village of considerable importance and magnitude. For ten years, Sun

Prairie was the western terminus of the Milwaukee and Baraboo Valley Railroad and was one

²¹ Butterfield, Consul W. *History of Dane County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1880. p. 833.

²² Butterfield, Consul W. *History of Dane County, Wisconsin*. p. 834.

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of the largest and most flourishing inland grain markets in the State.²³

By 1865, Sun Prairie contained 15 commercial enterprises; three hotels, two grain elevators, a bank, a drug store/grocery, two dry goods stores, a clothing store, a shoe store, and a lumber dealer.²⁴ With the exception of the two grain elevators, which were located along the railroad tracks on the south side of the village, almost all the other businesses were concentrated on East and West Main Street between Bristol Street to the west and Vine Street to the east (the 100 block of W. Main Street and the 10-200 blocks of E. Main Street), with the densest concentration being in the 100 block of E. Main Street, which occupies the heart of the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District.

One result of this period of prosperity, and the population growth that accompanied it, was that Sun Prairie incorporated as a Village in 1868. Within a year, however, the economic picture of the newly incorporated village changed.

In 1868, construction commenced on the railroad line to Madison, with the line reaching Madison in 1869, precipitating a severe economic decline in the village. Farmers and grain merchants no longer had to cart their grain to Sun Prairie to obtain low shipment rates. Sun Prairie merchants accustomed to the trade the farmers brought to their businesses had to retrench. If the railroad bypassed the village as proposed in the original plans, the village site could have been abandoned and moved south of the marsh. Col. Angell and community businessmen successfully lobbied the railroad not to abandon Sun Prairie. The new railroad line remained north of the marsh.²⁵

Even so, the change from having been the terminus of the railroad to becoming just another stop on the way to the new terminus in Madison had a profound effect on the growth of Sun Prairie and census statistics bore this out: population decline. In 1870 the population of the township of Sun Prairie was 984 and 626 in the newly incorporated village of Sun Prairie. A Bird's Eye View of Sun Prairie published in 1875 shows that at that time there were some 28 buildings located on Main Street between Bristol and Vine streets that were devoted to commercial usage.²⁶ Almost all of these buildings were either one or two-story-tall clapboard-clad frame buildings that were examples of either the Greek Revival or Boomtown styles or the Front Gable Vernacular Form, the only exceptions being the brick American House and Sun Prairie House hotels located at opposite ends of the 200 Block of

²³ Butterfield, Consul W. *History of Dane County, Wisconsin*, p. 834.

²⁴ *Wisconsin and Minnesota State Gazetteer and Shippers' Guide and Business Directory for 1865-1866*. Indianapolis: George W. Hawes, 1865, p. 210.

²⁵ Klein, Peter Michael. *Sun Prairie's People, Part 1: Shadows and Dreams*. Sun Prairie; Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum, 1993, pp. 63-64.

²⁶ *Bird's Eye View of Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin*. Madison: J. J. Stoner, 1875.

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E. Main Street (even side), both built in 1850, the brick Gilman Building built in 1870 at 101 W. Main Street, and the brick Charles Bird House located at 115 E. Main Street.²⁷

By 1880, however, the population of the town had fallen to 923 and in the village, to 597 and only a single building that is located in the district today was built in the 1870s, this being the brick-clad George Maloney Block located at 223-225 E. Main Street, built in 1878. The 1880s was little better and it was only towards the end of that decade that the gradual improvement in the economic situation of the village and especially of the area surrounding it began to be expressed in new buildings in the district. In 1887, the Hein brothers built a new two-story brick store building at 245 E. Main Street and in 1889 the destruction by fire of the American House hotel across the street resulted in the construction of two new two-story brick buildings on its former site, the drug store building of Dr. L. V. Lewis at 242 E. Main Street, and the building next door at 240 E. Main Street that first housed a saloon owned by Lebrecht Reddeman, all three buildings of which are located in the district. In addition, the hotel fire also resulted in the passage of a new city ordinance that mandated that from that time on, all new buildings in the downtown district had to be of brick construction.

By 1890, the new census showed that even though the population of the town had continued to decline in the 1880s to 912, the population of the village had increased to 704 during the same period. Part of this population increase can be attributed to the growing success of village businesses. These businesses catered primarily to area farmers using increasingly mechanized equipment, many of whom by 1890 were reaping the benefits of farming some of the richest farmland in the nation and from changes in agricultural practices in the area, the most important of which were the rise of the dairy industry and the introduction of tobacco as a new cash crop.

Almost half of all the contributing buildings in the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District were built in the 1890s and most of these represented replacement buildings built for merchants in the village who needed additional space to conduct their now thriving businesses. The earliest of these was the building located at 238 E. Main Street that was built for Matthew Dott in 1891 to house a saloon. Dott did not start a trend; however, because the nationwide financial panic in 1893 put a temporary halt to additional new construction. Dott's new building appears on the first Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance map of Sun Prairie, which was published in 1894 and shows that as of that date the downtown district contained just nine brick buildings and fifteen wood and metal-clad buildings that housed commercial activities, among which were interspersed three dwelling houses.²⁸ By 1895, however, the population of Sun Prairie had increased to 823, and new construction in the downtown had resumed, with the

²⁷ None of the buildings built in the downtown before 1875, excepting only the Henry Rood building built in 1862 at 213-215 E. Main Street, are now extant, and the Rood building was later expanded and modernized in 1930 and given a Twentieth Century Commercial Style façade.

²⁸ *Fire Insurance Map of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin*. New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co., 1894.

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Village Board taking the lead by building its large new City (Village) Hall at 100 E. Main Street designed by Ripon architect M. C. Radway. Three additional brick buildings were built in the district in 1896; the Hotel Kleiner at 101-105 E. Main Street, the B. F. Haberman meat market building at 219-221 E. Main Street, and the A. Johnson Building at 108-110 E. Main Street, and three more were built in 1897; the Thomas C. Hayden Block at 231-233 E. Main Street that housed his Bank of Sun Prairie, the Trapp's Cash Store Building at 235-237 E. Main Street, and the Isaac D. Hayden Building at 239 E. Main Street. These were followed by the A. Johnson Double Store Block at 227-229 E. Main Street, built in 1898, and the C. L. Long Block Building at 104 E. Main Street and the Charles Britton Block at 209-211 E. Main Street that housed his wife's millinery shop, both of which were built in 1899.²⁹

When the next Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance map of the village was printed in 1899 it showed that the village's downtown commercial core had been largely transformed by the construction that had occurred in the five years since the printing of the first map. By 1899, the number of brick commercial buildings located within the boundaries of the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District had increased to twenty-four, but there were now just four wood or metal-clad buildings of this type, and only two dwelling houses now remained.³⁰

The next decade would see still more construction in the district. In 1902, the village's first three-story commercial building was built, the Joseph C. Conrad Block located at 121 E. Main Street, and seven years later, in 1909, the very similar but slightly larger Lohneis-Weisensel Block was built across the street at 201-205 E. Main Street. In 1904, George Maloney built 114-116 E. Main Street as an investment, and in 1910, the construction of the Erhardt Batz Block at 200-208 E. Main Street resulted in the remodeling of two existing buildings and the building of a third, all three of which were then united behind a common façade.

The fact that only four new buildings were built in the district in this decade, though, is indicative of the economic reality of Sun Prairie's place in the scheme of things by this time. Comparing the Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance maps of Sun Prairie that were printed in 1899 with those printed in

²⁹No less than four additional brick commercial buildings were also built in the 1890s on both sides of the 100 block of W. Main Street; the Farmers and Merchants Bank at 109 W. Main Street, the Thompson Furniture Store Building at 106-108 W. Main Street, the Rodemand Butcher Shop Building at 104 W. Main Street, and the Rueth Harness Shop Building at 107 W. Main Street. Unfortunately, all four of them and also two earlier buildings have now been demolished as a result of the damage they sustained in the gas explosion that occurred on July 10, 2018.

³⁰ During this same five-year period, businessmen also constructed six tobacco warehouses along the railroad tracks south of the downtown in addition to the two grain elevators that had previously been built there. These new buildings were all located on land that bordered the railroad tracks (located two blocks south of the downtown), which by the 1890s belonged to the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific system (a.k.a. the Milwaukee Road). None of these nineteenth century buildings are now extant but, in their time, they constituted Sun Prairie's first industrial district.

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1894, 1905 and 1912 reveal that while progress in the form of the construction of larger, more substantial, and more impressive commercial buildings is evident throughout this period, the actual number of buildings in the downtown section of the village changed very little despite a gradual overall increase in the village's population.³¹ These maps show that the size of the village's commercial core changed hardly at all during this period, which suggests that the village had found its natural place in the economic life of Dane County by this time. These maps also show that the village's older frame construction commercial buildings were gradually being replaced one at a time by new buildings of brick during this period, which was fortunate for Sun Prairie. In many other Wisconsin villages of this time, large scale fires were responsible for this change. Whole blocks of frame buildings disappeared overnight in these conflagrations and if the community was lucky, well-insured, and fundamentally prosperous, the burned-out buildings were quickly replaced by masonry construction.

The replacement of older buildings in the district continued through World War II, but at the same slow rate. A new two-story brick building that housed bowling alleys and a pool hall was built at 120 E. Main Street in 1914, a fine new brick public library building designed by Madison architect and Sun Prairie native Alvan E. Small was built at 115 E. Main Street in 1924 and it replaced the last dwelling house in the district in the process. A very small infill building was built for F. J. Oehrlein at 112 E. Main Street in 1927, a new brick front was placed on the Rood-Hillenbrand Building located at 213-215 E. Main Street for the Hillenbrand Co. in 1930, and a new building was built at 207 E. Main Street in 1942 for Roy Weisensel.

World War II temporarily halted construction in the district until 1946, at which time the population of the village stood at 1,625. From that time on, however, the fortunes of the village were to change profoundly, although at first the changes were not evident in the district. In 1953, for instance, the last frame commercial building in the district, which was located at 243 E. Main Street and had been used as the tin shop of the adjacent Hayden Hardware Store, was demolished and replaced by the Contemporary style building owned by Ervin Cain that housed his women's wear store and a beauty shop. In 1958 the Robinson & Belda Insurance Building located at 109 E. Main Street replaced the last metal-sided building in the district. Other far reaching changes at this time were happening elsewhere in the residential sections of the village and this began shortly after the war ended.

Up until the end of World War II nearly all of the commercial enterprises in Sun Prairie were still associated with or were dependent on agriculture in some way. Agriculture had dominated the economic life of Sun Prairie since the village had been founded, and Sun Prairie's reason for existence was still basically based on its being the economic and social hub of the rural agricultural district that

³¹ Sun Prairie had a population of 938 in 1900 and 1119 in 1910. By 1920, however, the population had risen to just 1236 and it had only risen to 1337 by 1930.

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surrounded it. By 1950, Sun Prairie's population had increased to 2,263 and its proximity to the rapidly growing city of Madison was pulling it more and more into the orbit of the state's capital city, located just 12 miles to the southwest. Sun Prairie had long been linked to Madison by both an important railroad line and by a road that had been transformed over the years into US Highway 151, which in the 1950s was a major two-lane concrete highway that actually ran through Sun Prairie and through the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District via Main Street and then up Center Street on its way northeast towards the Fox River valley and Green Bay. The existence of this highway, coupled with widespread post-war automobile ownership, made Sun Prairie an increasingly attractive place from which to commute to work in Madison. As a result, new residential plats began to spring up around the village after the end of the war, beginning with Hill Crest Park in 1947, starting a trend that has continued to the present day. The following account of Sun Prairie's history that was written in 1991 gives some idea of the changes that occurred after the end of the war.

Promotional efforts [on the part of the village government] merged into a pattern of regular growth by the time the village's newspaper, *the Star-Countryman*, announced the 295-284 vote in favor of Sun Prairie's becoming a city on May 8, 1958. An industrial Development Corporation was formed in 1959, and by 1960, Sun Prairie could look back on a decade of unprecedented growth and look forward to doubling its population of 4000 in the next five years.

Today [1991], Sun Prairie is a fast growing satellite city with its own substantial industry and payrolls, including a business park established in 1985 which provides 495 jobs and has developed property worth \$17 million. Complementing commercial and industrial growth, 1366 residential units have been approved in the last five years, and looking ahead, the city will witness the construction of a new city hall and a multi-million dollar family aquatic center in the upcoming year.³²

Even this optimistic report, however, does scant justice to the city of Sun Prairie of today, whose corporate boundaries have been expanded vigorously into the surrounding countryside since then and whose population now stands at 29,364, making it one of the 25 largest cities in Wisconsin. Today, that portion of USH 151 that links Sun Prairie to Madison is a six-lane expressway routed west of the historic downtown, not through it, and multiple post-war retail centers within its boundaries now serve its citizens in addition to its historic downtown.

³² Ndlovu, Tracy. "Sun Prairie: a general history." Included in: *Looking Back: A Pictorial History of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin*. Sun Prairie: The Star, 1991, p. 6. Sun Prairie's population in 1990 was 15,333.

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Conclusion

Given all the changes that have occurred since the end of World War II it is remarkable that the historic buildings within the boundaries of the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District are still largely intact today and retain much of their historic appearance. Granted, the activities that these buildings house have changed over time. Retail offerings in Sun Prairie have expanded away from the historic downtown into other areas of the city, and the retail activities that are present in the historic downtown are of a different kind than what existed during the period of significance. This in no way diminishes the important historic commercial core of the city. Fortunately, the lack of new construction in and around the downtown core of the city after the end of World War II has resulted in the retention of most of the historic downtown's commercial buildings that were constructed prior to 1958. As a result, much of the city's commercial history is still visible in all its diversity today. The buildings within the district constitute the intact historic business core of Sun Prairie and they bear witness to the way in which commercial activity in the city evolved from the 1870s until the late 1950s. These enterprises have included hotels, banks, restaurants, hardware stores, general stores, post offices, drugstores, harness makers, grocery stores, and other usages, all of which were once central to the life of Sun Prairie and the surrounding area. Consequently, the district's contributing resources are of local significance in the area of Commerce and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because they constitute the embodiment of the first century of Sun Prairie's commercial life.

Architecture

The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture for its collection of commercial buildings that are good representative examples of the popular styles of the period: Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, Neoclassical Revival, Twentieth Century Commercial, and Georgian Revival styles, and Commercial Vernacular form designs. The district constitutes an intact ensemble that represents the continuous evolution of the various architectural styles that were associated with commercial buildings in Sun Prairie from the late 1878 through 1958 and they also comprise a high percentage of all the buildings that were *ever* constructed for this purpose in Sun Prairie up until the end of World War II. In addition, the significance of the district is further enhanced by the generally high degree of integrity and the well-maintained condition of its buildings. It continues to be a popular shopping and entertainment destination, both for the citizens of Sun Prairie and others.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for architecture begins in 1878, the year the oldest building in the district was constructed, and ends in 1958 when the last building reflecting historic period design, was constructed.

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The contributing buildings in the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District are all of brick or limestone construction and consist of: fourteen Commercial Vernacular form two-story buildings built between 1878 and 1914; two two-story Queen Anne style buildings built between 1896 and 1899; three one and two-story Twentieth Century Commercial style buildings built between 1910 and 1930; a single example of the Romanesque Revival style built in 1895; two Neoclassical Revival style buildings built in 1902 and 1909; and five Contemporary style buildings built between 1942 and 1994. The two Contemporary style buildings built in 1977 and 1955-1994 are both non-contributing due to their late date of construction or alteration after the historic period. These are all architectural styles and vernacular forms identified in the Architectural Styles study unit of the *Cultural Resource Management Plan* and the buildings in the district display many of the salient characteristics associated with each of these styles and forms.

Commercial Vernacular (ca.1850-1910)

Simply designed and lacking stylistic features that identify them with an academic style, these commercial buildings built between 1850-1910 are called Commercial Vernacular Form buildings. These buildings are usually two or three stories-tall, although one and four story-tall examples are also found. In multi-story examples the first floor is given over to retail space and the upper floors are often used for apartments, although other commercial uses such as offices are also common in upper floors. A typical original feature of such designs is a large ground floor show window(s) and frequently transom windows placed above the show window help to light the ground floor. Upper stories usually have simple multiple window openings which are treated identically on buildings of the simplest design. Commercial Vernacular Form buildings were often joined together by party walls though many free-standing examples exist. Unless a building occupies a corner site or is free-standing, decoration is usually limited exclusively to the main façade. A visually emphatic cornice featuring one or more decorative treatments such as brick corbelling, wooden moldings, and a stamped metal frieze usually terminates the main façade and the only other decoration is usually a decorative cornice or iron I-beam above the first-floor display window(s). Doors leading to both the ground floor and the upper floors are simple and are generally of paneled wood with a single window. Commercial Vernacular Form buildings are most often built of brick although both wood and stone examples are also found. While the mixing of two or more materials in the wall cladding of an individual building is sometimes seen, most examples usually feature just one material.

Nineteenth century examples of the Commercial Vernacular form are taller and narrower than their twentieth century successors, which are considered to be examples of the Twentieth Century Commercial Style, and they are sometimes somewhat more elaborately ornamented.

Thirteen of the contributing buildings in the district are examples of this form. The best and most intact of these buildings are: the George Maloney Block (223-225 E. Main Street), built in 1878; the

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John & William Hein/J.F. Dott & Co. Building (245 E. Main Street), built in 1887 and expanded in 1901; the Dr. L. V. Lewis Drug Store Building (242 E. Main Street), built in 1889; the B. F. Haberman Building (219-221 E Main Street), built in 1896; the Isaac D. Hayden Building (239 E. Main Street), built in 1897; the Trapp Cash Store Building (235-237 E. Main Street), built in 1897; and the A. Johnson Double Block (227-229 E. Main Street), built in 1898.

Romanesque Revival (1855-85)

As its name implies, the Romanesque Revival style was a modern reuse of the style which had preceded the Gothic style in European architecture. The dominant feature of the Romanesque Revival style is the round arch, which was used in windows, doors, and corbel tables. The style was especially popular for church buildings and was used for this type of building long after it ceased to be used for other types of buildings. Church buildings designed in this style frequently have a combination of towers of different heights, creating an asymmetrical composition, but symmetrical massing is also common. Towers, sometimes with parapets or a pyramidal roof, are often seen, and monochromatic brick or stone were the most popular building materials.

The only example of the Romanesque Revival style in the district is the former Sun Prairie City Hall located at 100 E. Main Street, which was built in 1895 to a design supplied by Ripon, Wisconsin architect M. C. Radway. It is interesting to note that while this building was designed to house Sun Prairie's civic administration offices and its fire station, its design incorporates a corner tower and has a gabled front-facing main façade that possesses a corbel table and grouped round arch windows, all elements that could just as easily have been applied to a church building of similar design had Radway had a different brief.

Queen Anne (1880-1910)

The district also contains two good examples of Queen Anne style commercial buildings. The Queen Anne style, as used for commercial buildings, was much more likely to approximate the appearance of contemporary English models than was the case with residential designs. Wisconsin examples of Queen Anne style commercial buildings are generally from one to three stories tall, have exterior walls which are usually constructed of brick, have either brick or stone trim, feature period revival style ornamentation that is sometimes of English origin, and have exterior elevations that usually feature bay windows or oriel windows placed above the first floor and corner towers that are either full height or treated as oriel bays.

The district contains two good examples of Queen Anne style commercial buildings: the Hotel Kleiner (101-105 E. Main Street), built in 1896 to a design supplied by Madison architect John Nader; and the Charles Britton Block (209-211 E. Main Street), built in 1899, both of which feature the second story

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riel bay windows that are a signature characteristic of the style.

Twentieth Century Commercial Style (1910-1935)

The Twentieth Century Commercial style is the most frequently observed of all styles applied to commercial buildings built in the early part of the twentieth century. Unlike other styles that were applied to the smaller commercial buildings of the period, this one is characterized by generalities in design, as described in the next paragraph, and found in both small and large cities throughout the state. Examples range from small one-story single storefront buildings to large two and three story, multi-unit commercial blocks.

Unlike the Commercial Vernacular form buildings that were built to house similar commercial enterprises in the nineteenth century, the twentieth century equivalent is broader and has less vertical emphasis. The style is characterized by a relatively unornamented, two-dimensional façade and a broad rectangular massing. Buildings are generally executed in brick, but other masonry and tile cladding is also found. A stepped or shaped parapet, often topped with a stone or concrete coping, is a common feature. Ornamentation is generally limited to the use of contrasting materials or to simple geometric patterns made of brick in the cornice, and simply ornamented storefronts, occasionally topped with a prism glass transom, are the rule. Typical examples will have rectangular panels in the cornice outlined by soldier or header brick courses, the insets of which are sometimes detailed with decorative brickwork in herringbone or basket weave patterns. Small insets of tile, stone, or concrete in diamond, square, or other simple shapes often form secondary accents.

The popularity of the Twentieth Century Commercial style may be due to the simplicity of its design and ease of construction. A secondary factor was its versatility in adapting to the new types and needs of commercial enterprises emerging in the early years of the century such as automobile showrooms and department stores. As the century progressed, examples become plainer in design, perhaps reflecting other modernistic architectural influences.

There are three examples of this style in the district: the triple store Erhardt Batz Block (200-208 E. Main Street), completed in 1911 to a design supplied by Madison architect Ferdinand L. Kronenberg; the minuscule one-story F.J. Oehrlein Building (112 E. Main Street), built in 1927; and the Rood-Hillenbrand Building (213-215 E. Main Street), which was given its Twentieth Century Commercial Style façade in 1930.

Neo-Classical Revival (1895-1935)

A style which became especially popular for public, institutional, and commercial buildings after the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, the Neoclassical Revival style was classical in inspiration and

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planning and stressed symmetry and the use of classical detailing. This detailing typically includes such characteristic elements as porticos whose roofs are supported by classical order columns, and symmetrically balanced windows and doors. The use of columns is all but ubiquitous in Neoclassical design and they may be either freestanding or used as engaged design elements such as pilasters. Public examples of the style were usually executed in stone or brick wall cladding and feature materials designed to express a feeling of monumentality and permanence.

Some public and private multi-story buildings built in the first half of the twentieth century that typically lack classically derived detailing, but whose composition “is analogous to the divisions of a classical column: base, shaft and capital” are also commonly considered to be examples of this style as well.³³ Such buildings may have some design features that are similar to examples of the Twentieth Century Commercial style, but their designs have a vertical emphasis rather than a horizontal one, and while they may lack the overt classical features of true Neoclassical Revival style designs they nevertheless reflect the influence of classical thought in their compositions.

There are two examples of this style in the district and their designs have so much in common that it is all but certain that they came from the still unknown hand: the three-story Joseph C. Conrad Block (121 E. Main Street), built in 1902; and the three-story-tall Lohneis-Weisensel Block (201-205 E. Main Street), built in 1909.

Georgian Revival (1900-1940)

This style borrows from both the historic Georgian and Federal styles and uses such characteristic design elements as symmetrical façades, rectangular plans, hipped roofs, and accurate classical details to produce designs having a sense of formality about them which is not typical of examples of the related Colonial Revival style. Popular exterior design elements include corners sporting quoins, denticulated cornices, Palladian-style three-unit windows, and symmetrically disposed double-hung windows having 6, 8, or 12 lights placed in the top sash (and sometimes in the lower sash as well). A favorite spot for elaborate ornamentation is the centrally-placed entrance door and typical features are broken pediments, classical order columns, semi-elliptical fanlights or transom lights, sidelights, and paneled entrance doors. Brick and stone are popular exterior materials and trim is often of wood although stone is also found on larger examples.

Only one example of the Georgian Revival style is found in the district, but it is an important example: the former Sun Prairie Public Library Building located at 115 E. Main Street, which was constructed in 1924 to a design supplied by Madison architect Alvan E. Small.

³³ Longstreth, Richard. *The Buildings of Main Street*. Washington D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987, p. 93.

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Architects:

Most persons contemplating building a residential or commercial building in smaller Wisconsin communities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would have had little need of the services of a professional architect. For such persons, the skills of a competent local builder who had access to some of the published plan books of the day would have been more than sufficient to build what was needed and indeed, builders such as these accounted for nearly all of the buildings built in all but the largest cities in the state during the nineteenth century. Few professional architects could make a living for very long in a community the size of Sun Prairie in the nineteenth century (and even in most of the twentieth); however, no one calling himself an architect is known to have practiced in Sun Prairie itself prior to the end of World War II.

When larger public buildings such as schools and churches were needed, most small communities turned to professional architects practicing in the state's largest cities for their designs and Sun Prairie, which is located just 12 miles from the capital city of Madison, was no different. Among the earliest Sun Prairie architectural commissions given to an outside architect was the community's City (village) Hall building built in 1895 and designed by M. C. Radway.

M. C. Radway

Marcious Clinton Radway (1841-1917) (who also spelled his name Marcus) was born in New York in 1841, the second son of Samuel and Elmira Radway. Samuel H. Radway (1815-unknown) was a self-taught millwright and cabinetmaker who constructed wooden water wheels in New York for ten years before bringing his family to Dartford, in Green Lake County, Wisconsin, in 1846. There he followed his trade for three years, then moved to the nearby village of St. Marie, Wisconsin, where he was employed as a cabinetmaker and millwright for the next ten years, during which time he built mills in Markesan, Princeton, and Sun Prairie.³⁴ Nothing is known of his son Marcus' formal education and architectural training but it is likely that he received much of it working with his father and other members of the building trades, as was typical of that time. What is known is that by the mid-1870s, M. C. Radway had settled in the city of Ripon, Wisconsin, where he was to remain until his death in 1917.³⁵ During this period, Radway worked as both a carpenter contractor and as a successful architect. He designed numerous buildings in Ripon and elsewhere in the mid-section of the state during his career, some of which included houses in Ripon such as 518 Newbury Street, his own house at 503 Watson Street, and the Edward Jussen house at 306 E. Jackson Street. Radway also designed the St. Wenceslaus Church's school in Ripon, the Baptist Church in Fairweather, Wisconsin, the O. H.

³⁴ *Portrait and Biographical Album of Green Lake, Marquette and Waushara Counties, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Acme Publishing Co., pp. 659-660.

³⁵ *Ripon Commonwealth*. January 5, 1917, p. 2. Obituary of Marcus C. Radway. Radway's given name was Marcious.

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Leuctenberg & Co.'s store building in Princeton, Wisconsin, a store building for H. Warnke, also in Princeton, and a house in Markesan, Wisconsin, for C. A. Freitag.

Radway designed just a single building in Sun Prairie, but it was an important one, which suggests that he must have enjoyed a good reputation as an architect. This was the Sun Prairie City Hall, which is located in the district at 100 E. Main Street and which was built out of brick in the Romanesque Revival style in 1895.

John Nader

John Nader (1838-1919) was born in Westchester, New York and was educated there and in Brooklyn at the Brooklyn Academy. His early training was as a mechanical and civil engineer. From 1861-1875 Nader worked with the United States Corps of Engineers as a civil engineer with the rank of Captain, and from 1861-1865 he acted as the superintendent of the coastal fortifications at Forts Hamilton, Tompkins, Wadsworth, and Sandy Hook. After the Civil War ended, he was engaged in a variety of different projects located throughout the east, which work brought him finally to Wisconsin and to Milwaukee in 1869, where he was engaged in work on Great Lakes lighthouses and on the Milwaukee sewer system. In 1871, Nader was appointed Assistant U. S. Engineer in charge of the Wisconsin River improvement with offices in Portage. These offices were moved to Madison in 1873, and while continuing his work for the government he also established a private office in Madison as a civil engineer.

In 1876, Nader was elected City Engineer for Madison, a position he held until 1883. During this period Nader also began to pursue a second complimentary career as an architect, which profession gradually became his principal work. In 1885, he was again elected City Engineer and while in this position designed and superintended the construction of Madison's first sewer system. Ill health resulted in Nader's moving to Virginia, where he spent the years 1887-1892 planning and laying out the towns of Big Stone Gap and Damascus and a large addition to the town of Bristol, while also designing numerous buildings. In 1893, he returned to Madison and resumed his practice.³⁶ Nader had a long and successful career in Madison and by 1899 was considered to be "Madison's Pioneer Architect" in one newspaper account. He practiced successfully in Madison until his retirement in 1911. In 1915 he returned to New York City where he died in 1919.³⁷

John Nader designed a single building in the district, the Hotel Kleiner at 101-105 E. Main Street, built in 1896.

³⁶ *Biographical Review of Dane County*. Chicago: Biographical Review Co., 1893, pp. 215-216.

³⁷ *Madison Democrat*. June 19, 1919. (Obituary of John Nader)

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Ferdinand L. Kronenberg

Ferdinand L. Kronenberg (1877-1944) was born in Germany but moved to this country with his parents when he was eight years old. Little is known about his training in architecture, but it is believed that he received most of it in the Madison offices of practicing architects, possibly with either J. O. Gordon or Lew F. Porter. The first mention of Kronenberg's name in connection with Madison is in the 1898-99 Madison city directory, where he is listed as an architect living (and presumably working) at 1520 Williamson Street. He appears to have continued to practice in this manner for the next several years, during which he lived at 413 S. Baldwin Street and 1502 Williamson Street. In 1904, both his office and his home were at 1423 Williamson Street, where he was to remain even after setting up practice with John T. W. Jennings in 1905 in the firm of Jennings & Kronenberg. This firm lasted until Jennings moved to Arkansas in 1908, after which Kronenberg worked alone, first in an office at 18 N. Carroll Street and then at 20 N. Carroll Street (extant). From 1911 until his death in 1944, Kronenberg lived at 1454 Williamson Street, a building he presumably designed for himself and his wife, Julia A. Kronenberg. During the 1930s, Kronenberg did architectural work in Madison for both the parks department and the board of education and he was a sectional engineer for the war department at the Badger Ordinance Works at Merrimac, Wisconsin during World War II.³⁸

Kronenberg was in practice as an architect in Madison for over 40 years, so it is not surprising that he left a substantial built legacy in that city, much of which still survives.

Kronenberg designed a single building in the district, the Erhardt Batz Block located at 200-208 E. Main Street, a triple store building that was completed in 1911.³⁹

Alvan E. Small

Alvan Edmund Small (1869-1932) was born in Sun Prairie in 1869. In 1887, after graduating from Sun Prairie high school, Small entered the architectural office of Conover & Porter in Madison as an

³⁸ *Wisconsin State Journal*. January 24, 1944. Obituary of Ferdinand Kronenberg.

³⁹ It is tempting to think that Kronenberg may have also had a hand in the design of the Lohneis-Weisensel Block located across the street at 201-205 E. Main Street, which was built the year before in 1909. The design of the Lohneis-Weisensel Block is very similar to the first three stories of the NRHP-listed Cardinal Hotel in Madison that Kronenberg designed and which was built in 1908. When Kronenberg started his partnership with John T. W. Jennings late in 1905, the two began to advertise in the *Sun Prairie Countryman* newspaper almost immediately, so Kronenberg's name would have been a familiar one in Sun Prairie when the Lohneis-Weisensel Block project was in the planning stages. If Kronenberg *did* have a hand in this design (and there is no documentary evidence to prove it), it may also have had something to do with the almost identical design of the Joseph C. Conrad building across the street at 121 E. Main Street, which was built in 1902 and which could have been designed by either Kronenberg or Jennings before their partnership was formed. All this is just speculation, however because unfortunately, no documentation has been found regarding the designer of either the Conrad block or the Lohneis-Weisensel Block, both of which were built by Sun Prairie contractor Frank Stegerwald & Son.

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apprentice architect. He worked there until 1899, when he went to Chicago, where he worked for a year in the office of Louis Sullivan. In 1900, Small returned to Madison to become the partner of Lew F. Porter, one of his former employers. In 1906, Porter left his firm to supervise the construction of the new State Capitol building and Small then continued the office under his own name.

Small is best known today for his outstanding residential designs, the most notable of which are a series of medium-sized Prairie School style houses in Madison that are among the city's finest examples of this style and which are uniformly distinguished by their almost abstract designs and superb sense of proportion. Even so, Small also produced a number of fine designs for non-residential commissions as well. One of the finest early designs attributed to Small is Randall Elementary School, which was completed while Small was working for Lew F. Porter (1906). Other important non-residential work included the fine Capital Paper Co. Building at 714 Williamson Street and the adjacent L. L. Olds Seed Co. Building next door at 722 Williamson Street, both built in 1912-1913.

In the 1920s, Small also executed a few Period Revival designs, and a number of these have Colonial Revival style details and share some of the abstract quality and the refined proportions of his better-known Prairie School designs. Partly this may be due to the presence in his office of John J. Flad, who worked in his office for a year in 1916 and then rejoined the firm as a partner in 1922. The new firm was called Small and Flad and it lasted until 1926, when Flad left to start his own practice.⁴⁰ Afterwards, Small practiced alone until his death in 1932.

Small designed a single building in Sun Prairie, the Sun Prairie Public Library, which is located in the district at 115 E. Main Street and built in 1924. This building is no longer a library, is City owned, and is now the Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum.

Conclusion

The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance, for its architectural significance under Criterion C as an intact ensemble of historic commercial buildings having architectural merit and being visually distinct from the surrounding historic residential neighborhood. Individually, the district's buildings do not have sufficient architectural significance for individual listing, but together illustrate the evolution of architectural design and the popular styles in Sun Prairie during the historic period. A small number are the documented work of important out-of-town architects. The district has good examples of the Commercial Vernacular form, and Twentieth Century Commercial style, as well as several examples of the Romanesque Revival, Neoclassical Revival, and Georgian Revival styles. The district's significance is further enhanced by the generally well-maintained status and high degree of integrity

⁴⁰ Quaipe, Milo (Ed.). *Wisconsin: Its Story and its People*. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1924, vol. 4, pp. 284-285.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 8 Page 18

that characterizes most of its buildings.

Preservation Activity

The Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District is fortunate in that it has been able to attract owners who take pride in their historic buildings and have, in some cases, restored them. In addition, the Sun Prairie Historical Society has been active in educating owners of historic resources in Sun Prairie as to the importance and value of historic preservation.

Archeological Potential

The extent of any archeological remains in the district is conjectural at this time. No information regarding possible prehistoric remains in this area was found in the course of this research and archaeological investigation was outside the scope of this nomination. The archaeological potential within this historic district remains unassessed.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 9 Page 1

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Continuation Sheet

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description:

The district boundary begins at a point on the south curb line of E. Main Street that corresponds to the southwest corner of the lot associated with 100 E. Main Street. The line then turns 85° and continues in a north-northeasterly direction along the east curb of N. Bristol Street until reaching the northwest corner of the irregular-shaped lot associated with 100 E. Main Street. The line then turns 70° and continues east along the rear lot lines of the lots associated with 108-112, 114, and 120 E. Main Street until reaching a point located on the west curb line of Columbus Street that corresponds to the northeast corner of the lot associated with 120 E. Main Street. The line then continues in a southeasterly direction across Columbus Street to a point on the east curb line of said street, then turns 90° and continues in a north-northeasterly direction along said east curb line until reaching a point that corresponds to the northwest corner of the lot associated with 200 E. Main Street. The line then turns 95° and continues in an easterly direction along the rear lot lines of the lots associated with 200, 204, 208, 210, 228, 238, 240, and 242 E. Main Street until reaching a point on the west curb line of Church Street that corresponds to the northeast corner of the lot associated with 242 E. Main Street. The line then turns 90° and continues south along said west curb line to a point that corresponds to the southeast corner of the lot associated with 242 E. Main Street. The line then continues south across E. Main Street to a point on the south curb line of said street that corresponds to the northeast corner of the lot associated with 245 E. Main Street. The line then continues south along the west curb line of Market Street to a point that corresponds to the southeast corner of the lot associated with 245 E. Main Street. The line then turns 90° and continues west along the rear lot lines of the lots associated with 245, 243, 239, 235-237, 231-233, 227-229, 223-225, 219-221, 213-215, 209-211, and 201-205 E. Main Street until reaching a point on the east curb line of King Street that corresponds to the southwest corner of the lot associated with 201-205 E. Main Street. The line then turns 90° and continues north along said east curb line a distance of 45-feet to a point on said east curb line that lies opposite a point on the west curb line that corresponds to the southeast corner of the lot associated with 121 E. Main Street. The line then turns 90° and continues west across King Street to said southeast corner of 121 E. Main Street, then continues in a westerly direction along the rear lot lines of the lots associated with 121, 115, 109, and 101-105 E. Main Street until reaching a point on the east curb line of S. Bristol Street that corresponds to the southwest corner of the lot associated with 101-105 E. Main Street. The line then turns 90° and continues north along the east curb line of S. Bristol Street to a point that corresponds to the northwest corner of the lot associated with 101-105 E. Main Street. The line then continues north across E. Main Street to the north curb line of said street and then turns 90° and continues west along said north curb line approx. 25 feet to the POB. These boundaries enclose approximately 2.7 acres.

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Continuation Sheet

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section 10 Page 2

Boundary Justification:

The district boundaries enclose all the land that has historically been associated with the district's resources, encompassing the buildings associated with the historic period and excluding adjacent non-contributing buildings or vacant parcels.

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section photos Page 1

Items a-d are the same for photos 1 – 21.

- a: name of nomination
- b: location
- c: preparer and date
- d: location of original images

Photo 1

- a) Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
- b) Sun Prairie, Dane County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Hegglund, Nov. 8, 2018
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) E. Main Street, View looking ESE
- f) Photo 1 of 21

Photo 10

- e) Isaac D. Hayden Building, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 10 of 21

Photo 2

- e) George Maloney Block, View looking S
- f) Photo 2 of 21

Photo 11

- e) A. Johnson Double Block, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 11 of 21

Photo 3

- e) Hein-Dott Building, View looking S
- f) Photo 3 of 21

Photo 12

- e) C. L. Long Block, View looking N
- f) Photo 12 of 21

Photo 4

- e) Dr. L. V. Lewis Building, View looking NW
- f) Photo 4 of 21

Photo 13

- e) Charles Britton Block, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 13 of 21

Photo 5

- e) Matthew Dott Building, View looking N
- f) Photo 5 of 21

Photo 14

- e) Joseph C. Conrad Block, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 14 of 21

Photo 6

- e) Sun Prairie City Hall, View looking NNE
- f) Photo 6 of 21

Photo 15

- e) George Maloney Investment Building, View looking N
- f) Photo 15 of 21

Photo 7

- e) Hotel Kleiner, View looking NW
- f) Photo 7 of 21

Photo 16

- e) Lohneis-Weisensel Block, View looking SSE
- f) Photo 16 of 21

Photo 8

- e) B. F. Haberman Building, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 8 of 21

Photo 17

- e) Erhardt Batz Block, View looking N
- f) Photo 17 of 21

Photo 9

- e) Trapp Cash Bargain Store Building, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 9 of 21

Photo 18

- e) Sun Prairie Public Library, View looking S
- f) Photo 18 of 21

Photo 19

- e) Rood-Hillenbrand Building, View looking S
- f) Photo 19 of 21

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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section photos Page 2

Photo 20

- e) Ervin Cain Building, View looking S
- f) Photo 20 of 21

Photo 21

- e) E. Main Street, General View, View looking NE
- f) Photo 21 of 21

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

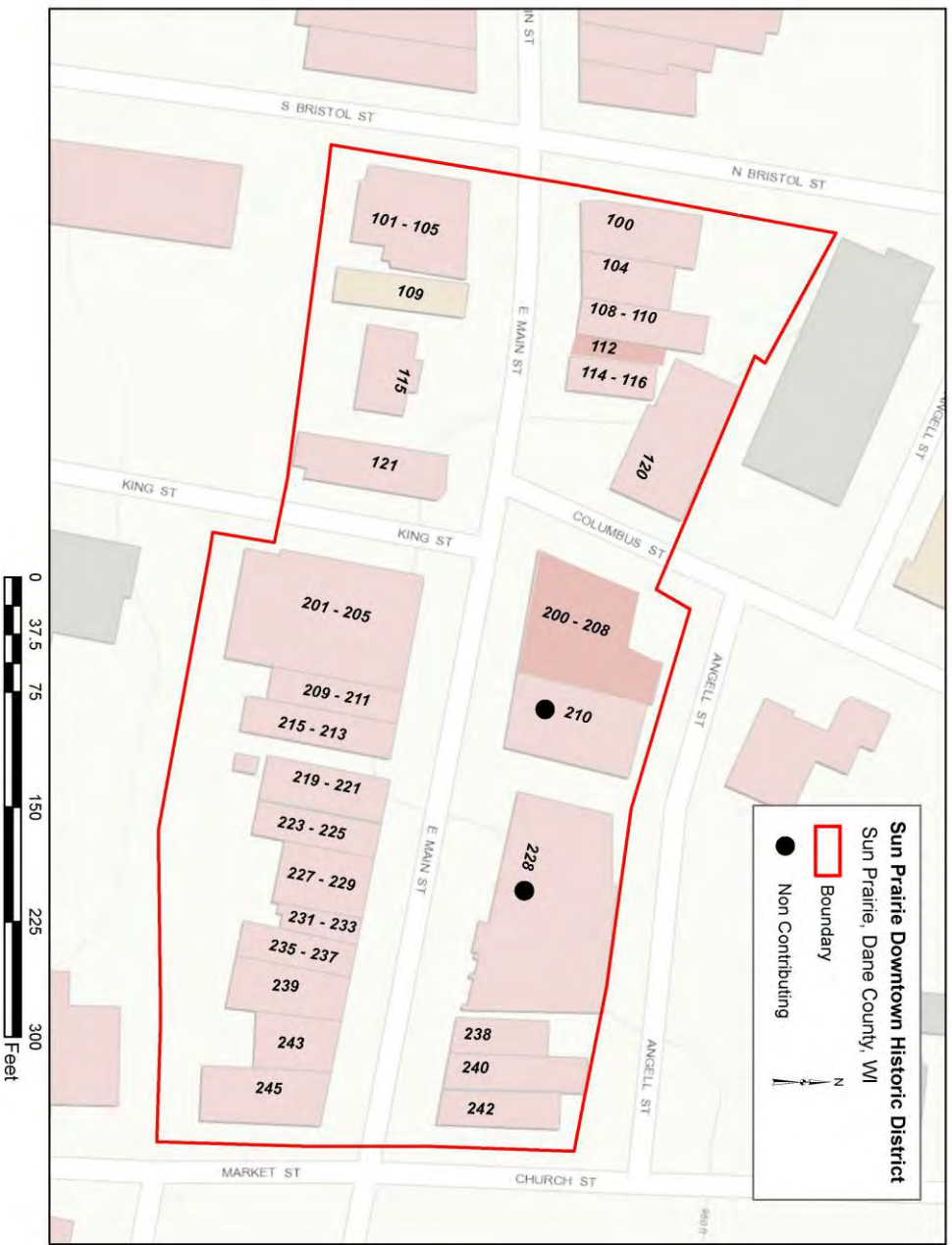
**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section figures Page 1

Insert Figures

Figure 1: Boundary Map



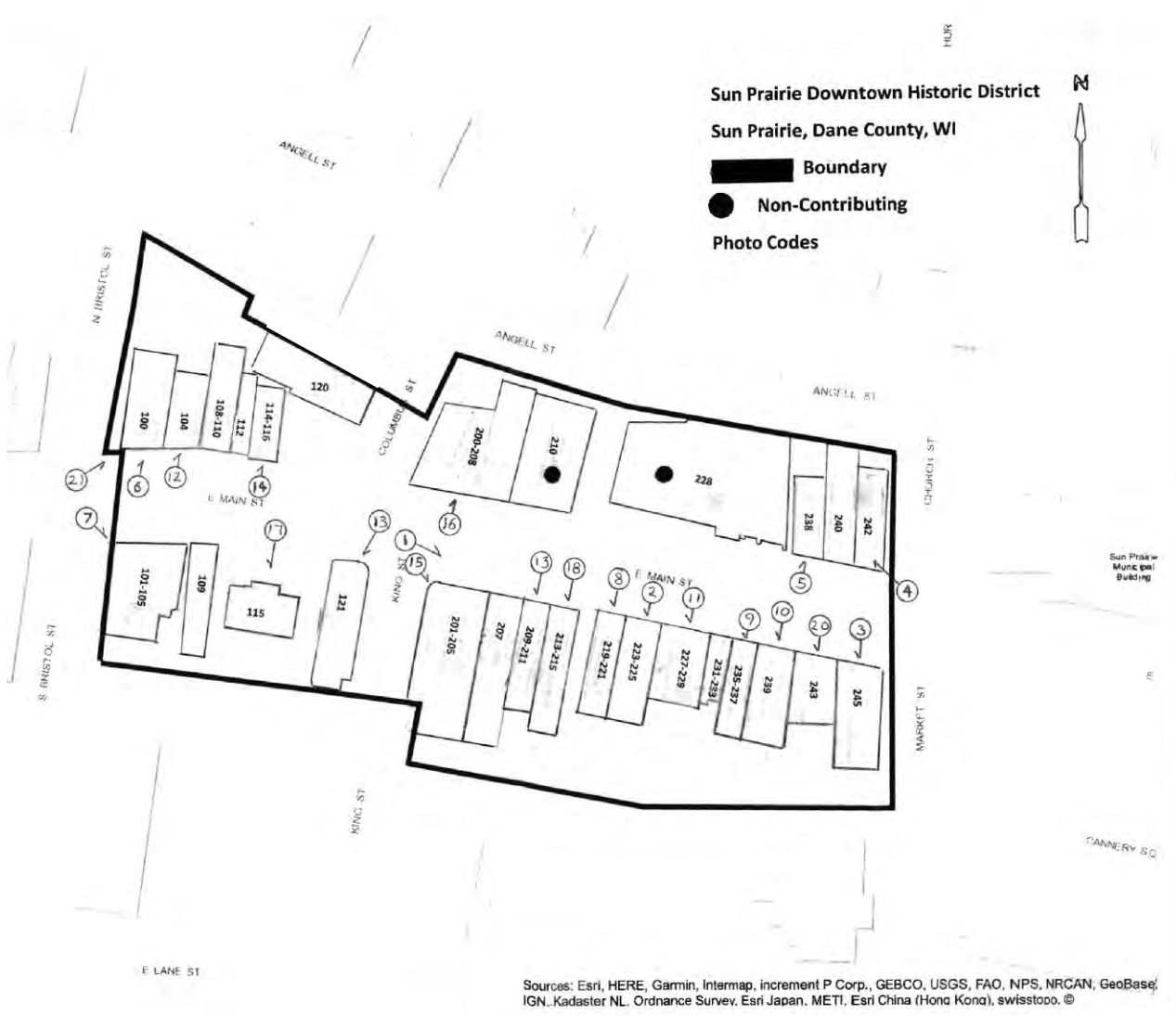
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

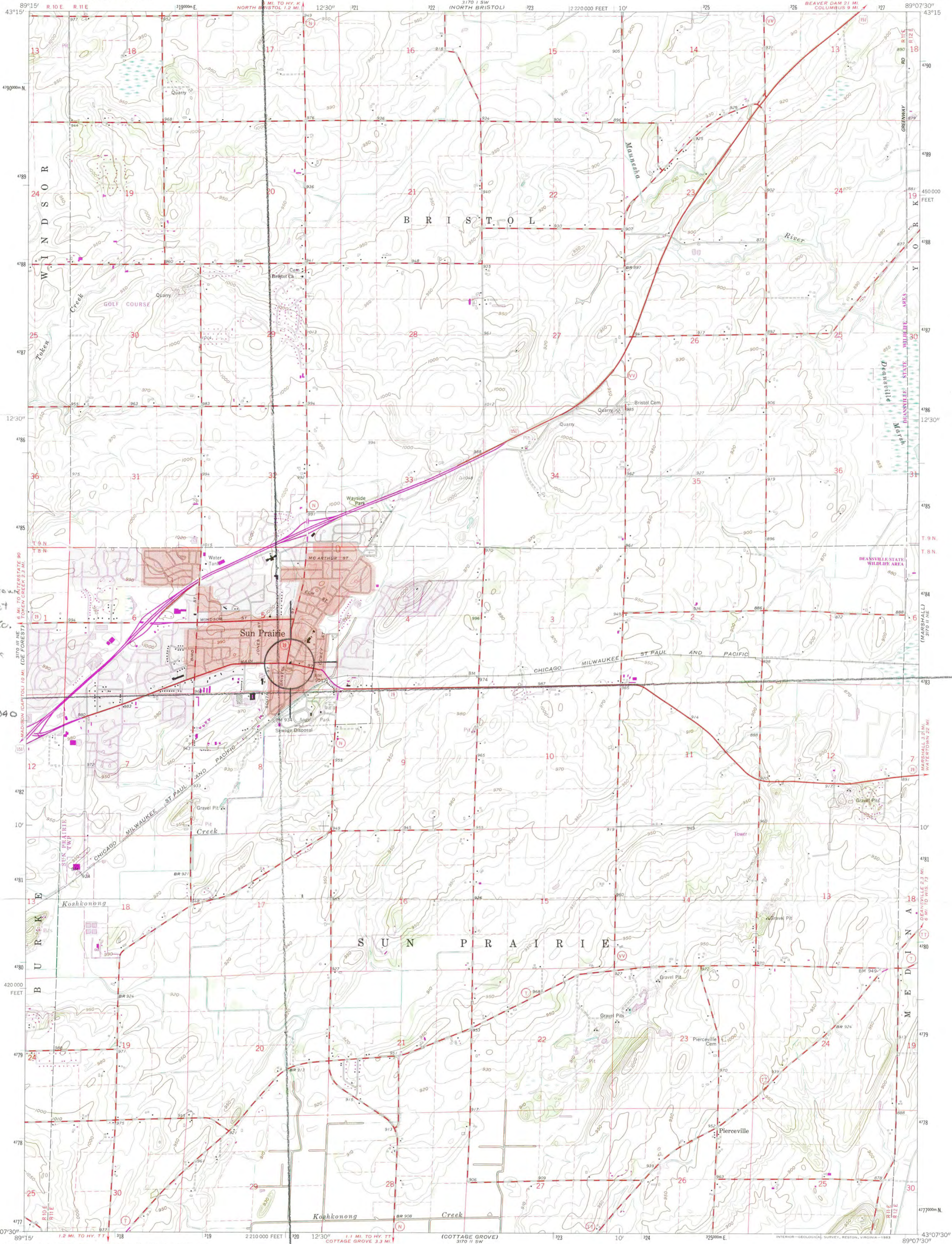
Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane County, Wisconsin

Section figures Page 2

Figure 2: Photo Key



___End Figures



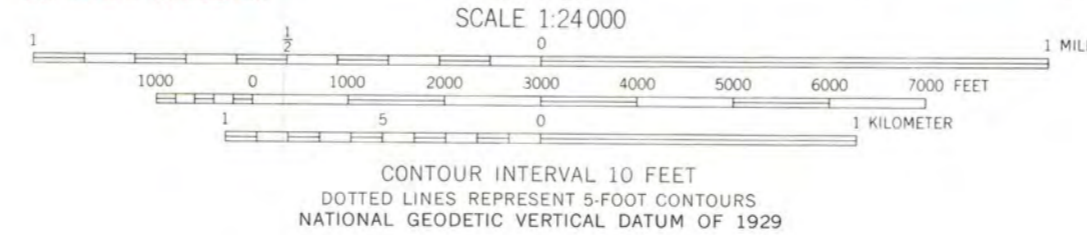
Sun Prairie Downtown
Historic District
Sun Prairie, Dane Co.,
WI
UTM Coordinates
Z E N
16 320140 4783340

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with State of Wisconsin agencies

Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1960. Field checked 1962
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Wisconsin coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 4 meters north and
9 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

UTM GRID AND 1982 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND BY THE WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty — Light-duty
Medium-duty — Unimproved dirt
U. S. Route — State Route

SUN PRAIRIE, WIS.
NW/4 SUN PRAIRIE 15' QUADRANGLE
N4307.5—W8907.5/7.5

PHOTOREVISED 1982
DMA 3170 II NW—SERIES V861





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GARDEN
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AND
1 BR RMS
NOW RENTING
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King

Main

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JEWELRY

MALONEY



225



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Interior Design • Furniture



Interior Design

Lighting • Window Treatments

225

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Prairie Flowers & GIFTS LLC

(608) 837-3830 Happiness Inside FlowersSunPrairie.com



the
Wire
Basket
-vintage treasure
& unique a



238 E MAIN



238 EAST MAIN



SP



1895

CITY HALL

[Boarded up window]

[Window with blinds]

[Entrance]



Tyvek HomeWrap

EL PINO

STOP



J. J. STITCHES & CO.

219





237

235

BIKE REPAIR

PAUDAVIS

OPEN

HARDWARE



NO PARKING
HERE TO CORNER
←





Prairie Junction
NEEDLEWORK



225

Inter
Interior D

LONG

Board & Brush
creative studio



Board & Brush
creative studio



WE BACK
THE BRAVE



G
GARIBOLDI
FAMILY

#SUN PRAIRIE
STRONG

NO
PARKING

NO
PARKING

Forever Yours Jewelry Inc.

211

COLLECTOR'S CHOICE COINS

COINS

OPEN

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CABINETS COUNTERTOPS
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PRAIRIE PILLS

SALVATORE'S

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PRAIRIE PILLS

SALVATORE'S

4
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BEST PRICES

PREMIUM LIQUIDS
LARGEST SELECTION
BEST PRICES

STOP



1924
PUBLIC LIBRARY

MUSEUM

MUSEUM

Sun Prairie Historical
Library and Museum

113
TOUR BOOK

THE CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM
800-333-5271



215

www.rachelmanzke.com

An advertisement for Rachel Manzke, featuring a baby's face on the left and hands on the right, with the website address www.rachelmanzke.com in the center.

215

213



243

the
Bwire Basket
-vintage treas-
& unique gifts

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MORE PARKING IN BACK!

sun prize stags

PLEASE USE OTHER DOOR

WE'RE CLOSED

HEN & ROOSTER VINTAGE
Antiques, Man-Caves & Farmhouse Decor

SOON TO BE CLOSED

TROUBLE





CITY HALL

pepsi
WAGNER'S BAR

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 4/9/2019 Date of Pending List: 4/30/2019 Date of 16th Day: 5/15/2019 Date of 45th Day: 5/24/2019 Date of Weekly List: 5/28/2019

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 5/21/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

TO: Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Peggy Veregin
National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination



The following materials are submitted on this Fifth day of April 2019, for the nomination of the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1 Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form
- 1 CD with NRHP Nomination form PDF
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- 21 Photograph(s)
- 1 CD with image files
- 1 Map(s)
- 2 Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibit(s)
- Piece(s) of correspondence
- Other:

COMMENTS:

- Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do or do not constitute a majority of property owners
- Other: