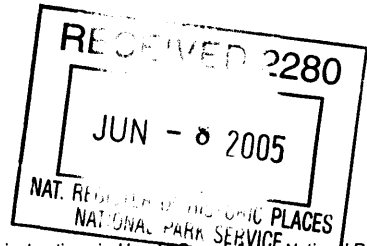


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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places 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 Moscow Downtown Historic District

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

### 2. Location

street & number Generally bounded by 1<sup>st</sup> St. on the north, 6<sup>th</sup> St. on the south, Washington St. on the east and the alley between Main and Jackson on the west. N/A not for publication

city or town Moscow N/A vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Latah code 057 zip code 83843

### 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.)

Kenneth C. Reid June 7, 2005

Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
KENNETH C. REID, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Edson H. Beall 7/22/05  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Moscow Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Moscow, Latah, Idaho  
City, County, and State

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

#### Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

#### Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>26</u>	<u>28</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>26</u>	<u>28</u>	Total

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

N/A

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

6

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE  
DOMESTIC  
SOCIAL  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE  
GOVERNMENT  
SOCIAL: Civic  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Italianate  
Romanesque; Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
Revivals: Mission/Spanish Colonial  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
American Movements: Commercial Style  
Modern Movement: Art Deco

#### Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>CONCRETE</u>
walls	<u>BRICK: METAL: Cast Iron, Aluminum</u>
roof	<u>WOOD: Shake,; OTHER</u>
other	<u>Terra Cotta Sandstone</u>

### Narrative Description

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Moscow Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Moscow, Latah, Idaho  
City, County, and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" on all 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.

## Narrative Statement of Significance

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

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

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

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  Other State agency
- 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
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

### Period of Significance

1889-1953

### Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

Moscow Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Moscow, Latah, Idaho  
City, County, and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 18 Acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 1 1 4 9/9/9/1/0 5 1/7/5/3/5/0 B 1 1 5 10/0/0/3/0 5 1/7/5/3/5/0  
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

C 1 1 5 0/0/0/2/0 5 1/7/4/9/6/0 D 1 1 4 9/9/9/2/0 5 1/7/4/9/6/0

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Suzanne Julin

organization Suzanne Julin, Public Historian date August 17, 2004

street & number 500 Hartman #F telephone 406/544-8606

city or town Missoula state MT zip code 59802

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### \* Continuation Sheets

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

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

\* **Photographs:** Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

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

## Property Owner

name Multiple

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Name of Property Moscow Downtown Historic District  
County and State Latah, Idaho

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## Narrative Description

### Introduction

The Moscow Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A (Commerce/Trade) for association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history. For much of its early history, Moscow's downtown boasted a number of large, well-stocked retail stores, as well as many other enterprises. The scope of commercial development exceeded the needs of the town's population; rather than simply a local marketplace, Moscow became a regional trade center reflecting the prosperity of the surrounding agricultural area, and its downtown was the hub of that activity well into the 1950s. The significance of this development is reflected in this historic district.

The Moscow Downtown Historic District is a roughly rectangular-shaped area encompassing approximately ten blocks and including sixty buildings. Six of the buildings are previously listed in the National Register, and an additional twenty-six buildings contribute to the historic character of the area. Only eight of the district's buildings were constructed after the period of significance, 1889 to 1953. All of the buildings in the district were constructed for commercial use or for use by financial institutions; even the IOOF and Masonic Lodges, built by fraternal orders, offered commercial space at their ground levels. The area remains a commercial and financial district and reflects the development of Moscow as a regional business and trade center.

The six buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places are the McConnell-McGuire building at 102-106 South Main; the Skattaboie Block at 403-405 South Main; Hotel Moscow at 309-313 South Main; Dernham and Kaufman/David's building at 302 South Main; Kenworthy Theater at 508 South Main; and the Nu Art Theater at 514 South Main.

### District Development

The foundation of the Moscow Downtown Historic District was established between 1888 and 1893, when nearly one-third of its existing buildings were constructed. This wave of building, which created the district's most imposing structures, resulted from a commercial and agricultural boom and the optimism it inspired. The national financial crash in 1893, coupled with a local crop failure, brought business construction to a halt. When it resumed, the resulting buildings were more modest in scale. Moscow's position as a trade center, however, continued.

The Moscow Downtown Historic District retains a high percentage of buildings constructed during the period of significance, 1889-1953, and the building patterns represent economic changes in the community during that time. Only two of the district's existing buildings (one of which was converted to three separate buildings after a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century fire) were built between 1893 and the turn of the century, a period that marks the end of Moscow's initial boom and the gradual return to economic stability. Twenty percent of the district's buildings were constructed between 1900 and World War I. The pre-war years saw further development of East Third Street with four of the existing structures built in the 100 block during that time. Buildings in the district on Second, Fifth, Sixth, and Washington streets represent construction during the ensuing decades. Three of the present buildings were built during the Depression years, and five during the 1940s. The district had a final significant fire in 1953 that resulted in conversion of an 1890s commercial block into three separate structures. Moscow's commercial district

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2 Name of Property Moscow Downtown Historic District  
County and State Latah, Idaho

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not only illuminates the history of its business community's development and evolution but also reflects the economic history of the region and the nation.

### Boundary Description

The Moscow Downtown Historic District is bounded on the north by First Street. The boundary proceeds south on the alley between Main and Washington streets to Second St., and then east to Washington Street. The boundary extends south to Fifth Street and then west to the alley between Main and Washington and then south to Sixth Street. Sixth Street forms the boundary on the south, and the alley between Main and Jackson streets from Sixth to First marks the boundary on the west. The area north of First Street holds newer construction as well as a number of noncontributing commercial structures. To the east, newer or noncontributing commercial structures are mixed with civic buildings and residential areas. Sixth Street marks a division between the historic commercial section and an area containing noncontributing structures, the community's hospital and other health-related services, and a grain elevator complex. Jackson Street is a busy, one-way arterial with mixed residential and business use, and the area to its west holds newer commercial development.

### Streetscape and Landscape

The Moscow Downtown Historic District is anchored by a number of imposing buildings constructed during the 1889-1893 period. For example, the intersection at Main and Fourth holds one of these buildings at each corner: the Hotel Moscow (originally The Moscow) at 309-313 South Main (Photo #6, Map #15), the Skattabo Block at 403 South Main, (Photo #7, Map #16), the Shields Building North at 402-404 South Main (Photo #2, Map #37), McCartor Block South at 316-318 South Main (Map #38). The Kaufmann and Dernham/David's building on the southeast corner of Third and Main (Photo #3, Map #40) and the McConnell-McGuire Building on the southeast corner of First and Main (Photo #4, Map #47) further illustrate early commercial development in Moscow. More modest buildings, ranging from the Oberg Brothers Store, built in 1913 (Photo #11, Map #53), to the simple commercial building at 405-407 South Washington (Photo #10, Map #48) represent the development of small-scale commercial enterprises after the 1893 business reversal. The majority of the buildings in the district are built of brick. The exceptionally wide Main Street provides a spacious setting for the structures that line it.

### Architectural Styles

A number of the buildings in this district, especially the more imposing structures built during the 1889-1893 period, exhibit particular architectural styles. These include Italianate, Romanesque, Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, and Art Deco. The majority of the buildings, however, reflect relatively simple commercial architecture in the form of one-part and two-part block buildings, and many display unique elements, especially patterned brickwork.

#### Italianate

Buildings in the Italianate style often feature low-pitched roofs and ornate cornices, wide eaves with decorative brackets, and arched windows under hood moldings or eyebrow window heads. They also may exhibit carved decorative elements; in the 1850s, techniques to use cast iron or pressed metal to form such decorations meant

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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County and State Latah, Idaho

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that buildings could be decorated more cheaply than with carved stone.<sup>1</sup>

The brick Commercial Block/Forney Building at 213-215 South Main (Photo #1, Map #10), built in 1890, exhibits Italianate features. The second story originally held five round-headed windows. The upper sections of the windows have been filled in, but the hood moldings with keystones remain. A pedimented, rounded-headed entrance leads to the staircase and apartments on the second floor. The modern storefronts contain a restaurant and commercial space.

The Shields Building North at 402-404 South Main (Photo #2, Map #37), built in 1889, originally featured a more elaborate cornice and corner turrets. However, the upper two stories retain much of their original integrity, including round-headed windows framed by segmental brick hoods topped by keystones. The building's mass and its retention of upper-floor fenestration and design clearly recall its origins.

The large Kaufmann-Dernham/David's building at 302 South Main (Photo #3, Map #40) is similar to the Shields North Building in that its rounded windows under hood moldings most clearly reveal its Italianate design. Some ornamentation has been removed from the parapet, but pilasters and ornamental brick work remain.

The McConnell-McGuire building at 102-106 South Main (Photo #4, Map #47), built in 1891, is the most imposing commercial building in Moscow. The third-floor, round-headed windows with keystones; the building's cast-iron pilasters separating its facades into several bays; and its slightly projecting, ornamented cornice are Italianate in origin. The name McConnell is featured prominently in its central parapet; at one time, an elaborate pediment occupied this space. Pressed tin decorations in the shape of animal heads accent the building's bays. Two original stained-glass windows appear on the north-facing façade.<sup>2</sup>

Mason Cornwall built the Cornwall Block in 1890 (Photo #5, Map #56). Originally a three-story building, it was reduced to two stories after an early-twentieth century fire. The corner entrance bay, typical of bank buildings of the day, terminates in an arched design featuring its owners' name and the building date. Cast-iron pilasters frame one of three entrances and appear at one side of another. Corbelling highlights the roofline, and brick pilasters divide the building into several bays. Second-story windows appear beneath hood moldings with keystones. The building's mass and detail retain its prominent presence on this street just off Main.

## Romanesque

Romanesque architecture is a relatively wide category including Romanesque Revival, Victorian Romanesque, and Richardsonian Romanesque, all emerging most predominately in the last half of the nineteenth century. Richardsonian Romanesque is prominent among these styles; its characteristics include arched window and door openings, rough surfaces and complex masonry, bands of windows, and single towers. In Romanesque buildings, the overall impression is of a heavy, substantial structure.

The Hotel Moscow, originally named The Moscow, is located at 309-313 South Main (Photo #6, Map #15). The brick structure was built in 1892 and is highlighted by horizontal bands of sandstone trim. The Main Street façade features two wide and two narrow bays and a prominent arched entry. Rectangular windows appear on the second floor, at the rounded corners, and under the narrow pediment; arched windows with sandstone trim grace the third floor. An iron pediment and a turret roof were removed in a remodeling. A 1937 addition to the rear of the hotel is sympathetic to the building.

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County and State Latah, Idaho

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Across the intersection to the south, the Skattaboe Block (Photo #7, Map #16) echoes the solid mass of The Moscow. Built in 1891, it also features a rounded corner and contains a wide, arched corner entrance. Brick pilasters divide the building into bays. Wide, arched windows appear on the first floor and more narrow, arched windows on the second floor. Transoms have been filled in, but the original shapes of the windows remain a defining element of the building. An ornamental brick cornice highlights the Skattaboe.

### Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

Mission style is characterized by round arches, red-tiled roofs, simple parapets and equally simple ornamentation. Spanish Colonial Revival buildings also feature tiled roofs, as well as shaped parapets and walls with rough finishes.<sup>3</sup>

Built as a photographer's studio in 1926 at 521 South Main, Sterner's Studio (Photo #8, Map #26) nearly faced another Spanish Colonial Revival structure: The Kenworthy Theater at 508 South Main. The Kenworthy's 1949 remodeling changed its earlier design, and this small building is the only representation of these styles in Moscow's downtown. The capped pilasters rise on each side of the entryway and frame a shaped parapet; two additional capped pilasters mark each end of the building. The steeply pitched, red-tiled roof forms a canopy effect over each of the storefront windows.

### Art Deco

Art Deco became a popular architectural style in the 1920s. The style rejected historic references and imitations of earlier architecture and featured geometrical designs, stylized decorative elements, and smooth surfaces.<sup>4</sup>

Milburn Kenworthy, a prominent local theater operator, erected the Nu Art Theater in 1935 (Photo #9, Map #32), in the midst of the Great Depression. The brick construction varies from the usual Art Deco characteristic of smooth, monochromatic materials; however, its rectangular central bay with rectangular panels and its triangular neon sign, rising from the marquee to the building's rooftop, clearly suggest the geometric forms important to Art Deco. The building retains these features, as well as geometric chrome and wrought-iron railings and chrome and glass, torchere-style light fixtures on the interior.

### Commercial

The majority of the buildings in the Moscow Downtown Historic District are one- or two-story, brick structures built to house business enterprises of various kinds. For the most part, they can be identified as one-part commercial block or two-part commercial block. One-part commercial blocks are one-story buildings, usually with a flat roof, which may present a false front or elaborately decorated cornice. They were customarily built with large, plate-glass windows for display purposes, often surrounding the entry. Two-part commercial block buildings are two or more stories high and exhibit a clear separation between two levels, often reflecting the function of the different parts of the building—for instance, retail space on the ground floor and office space above.<sup>5</sup> These buildings are simpler than those associated with distinct architectural styles, but they often exhibit masonry patterns and other details that indicate their builders' efforts to make them distinct and attractive.

The Oberg Brothers Store building at 128 East Third (Photo #11, Map #53) is an example of two-part commercial block. Built about 1913 as a single-story structure, the store was later expanded to two floors to accommodate the firm's mercantile business. A modern storefront has replaced the original, but the second story retains raised bricks forming a diamond pattern across the façade.



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Historic maps indicate that the one-part commercial block at 405-407 Washington (Photo #10, Map #48), currently occupied by Follett's Mountain Sports, was built during the 1920s. The brick structure features three bays separated by brick pilasters; the upper part of the façade holds decorative brick panels in geometric frames in each of the bays.

The Kenworthy Theater at 508 South Main (Photo #12, Map #34) is a two-part commercial block. Between 1925 and 1949, this building presented a brick façade with Spanish Colonial elements. Milburn Kenworthy remodeled it to reflect modern trends in theater architecture. He covered the Main Street façade with terra cotta tiles and installed a wide aluminum glass entry with window panels, poster display frames, and a ticket booth. The first floor is clearly defined by color—the lower one-third of the building is green tile, while the upper two-thirds feature beige tiles—and by the prominent marquee.

The O'Connor Building at 206-210 South Main (Photo #13, Map #43) provides another interesting example of a two-part commercial block. Originally part of the Spicer Block, built in 1898, this section of the building was almost completely destroyed in a 1953 fire. Subsequently, it was rebuilt and renamed. The two-story, concrete and plaster building features a prominent storefront on the ground level; the upper story is highlighted by a band of windows and an inscription, "O'Connor Building 1953" set into a simple brick string course.

## Summary

The majority of the buildings in the Moscow Downtown Historic District were built between 1889 and 1953; nearly one-third of them were built between 1889 and 1893, the height of the young town's boom period. The variety of sizes and appearances illustrate architectural styles, commercial needs, business aspirations, and the craftsmanship and creativity employed in developing even simple commercial buildings. The changes in buildings over the years represent responses to consumer demands, architectural and stylistic trends, and unforeseen emergencies. The district's buildings reflect the growth of this commercial section and the history of the community and the region.

## Endnotes

1. John C. Poppeliers, S. Allen Chambers, Jr., and Nancy B. Schwartz, *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture* (Preservation Press, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1983), pp. 46-49.
2. Poppeliers, Chambers and Schwartz, *What Style Is It?*, pp. 62-65; John J. G. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Second Edition, 1981), pp. 43-47.
3. Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture*, pp. 5, 9.
4. Poppeliers, Chambers, and Schwartz, *What Style Is It?*, pp. 88-89.
5. Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* (AltaMira Press, 1987, 2000 edition), 24, 54-59.

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Continuation Sheet**

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County and State Latah, Idaho

**INVENTORIED PROPERTIES  
Moscow Downtown Historic District  
Moscow, Latah County, Idaho**

Map #	Address	Date	Classification
1	105 South Main	1964	Noncontributing
<p>Style: One-part Commercial Block. Built on the site of Moscow's first store, this building was originally occupied by the Bank of Idaho and is now home to Zion's Bank.</p>			
2	107 South Main	c. 1910	Noncontributing
<p>Style: One-part Commercial Block. This small, one-story, rectangular building served as a tailor shop in the 1920s. A 1973 remodeling removed the original cornice and parapet and covered the brick with concrete.</p>			
3	111 South Main	c. 1911	Contributing
<p>Style: One-part Commercial Block. The one-story, brick building features a parapet roofline and cantilevered brick at the cornice. These features recall the structure's original appearance, although some windows have been plastered over and a modern storefront installed.</p>			
4	175 South Main	c. 1909	Noncontributing
<p>No Style. Originally constructed about 1909, this building served as a pool hall and lunch room. In 1946, the American Legion purchased the building, added a second story to hold its club room, and rented the bottom floor to a furniture store. In subsequent years, the building was used as a bowling alley and beauty school. Subsequent renovations have changed the original brick façade.</p>			
5	201 South Main	1893	Contributing
<p>Style: One-part Commercial Block. This one-story, brick building was constructed by A. A. Lieuallen in 1893, and served as a wholesale liquor store and then a realty office. The building retains a parapet roofline with cornice caps and a brick frieze.</p>			
6	203 South Main	1893	Noncontributing
<p>No Style. A. A. Lieuallen built this one-story, brick building in 1893. Originally used as a meat market, it became Badger General Merchandising in 1896, established by Frank A. David, who later expanded his business to David's Department Store in another location. Shake shingle siding applied to the building in the 1970s covers the brick detailing on the façade.</p>			

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County and State Latah, Idaho

7                      205 South Main                      c. 1890                      Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This building was constructed about 1890 and served several functions, including saloon, shoe shop, and jewelry store. The upper section of the one-story structure exhibits the original brick frieze work.

8                      207 South Main                      c. 1893                      Contributing

Style: Italianate. The two-story, brick building housed the grocery store of J. W. Lieuallen, nephew of A. A. Lieuallen, in the 1890s. Bjorklund's Hardware occupied the space for four decades, beginning in the 1930s. The second story retains brick detail and two arched window openings with hoods.

9                      211 South Main                      c. 1891                      Noncontributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. Charles Smith and Charles H. Dolson constructed this two-story, brick building in 1891 to house their general store. In 1896, George Creighton and Foster Hall acquired the building and established the Chicago Store here. Creighton later renamed the building the Creighton Block and called the store Creighton's. In the early 1960s, a renovation covered the building's central parapet and the three large, arched windows on the second story.

10                      213-215 South Main                      1890                      Contributing

Style: Italianate. Isaac C. Hattabaugh constructed this building, known as the Commercial Block, in 1890 to house his Commercial Bank. The bank occupied the south side, while a newspaper, *Star of Idaho*, operated in the northern section. (See Photo #1)

11                      217-219 South Main                      1893                      Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Meat market owners Holt and Robertson built this one-story structure in 1893, after the original building burned. The southern section held a meat market for many years, and in 1947, became home to the Modern Way Grocery. A saloon and a shoe store were tenants in the north side. The original checkerboard brick design remains on the upper façade.

12                      221 South Main                      1964                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This one-story brick building, constructed in 1964 as the First Security Bank, is now occupied by Wells Fargo Bank.

13                      301 South Main                      1965                      Noncontributing

Style: International. This two-story, poured-concrete structure features a drive-through bay on the north side and rows of rectangular windows recessed in concrete framing.

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County and State Latah, Idaho

14                      307 South Main    c.1892                      Noncontributing

Style: Modern Movement. George B. Hovenden and A. T. Gilbert built this three-story structure about 1892. Hodgins Drug was an early tenant and the business has remained in the building ever since, although no longer owned by the Hodgins family. In 1957, a renovation covered the pressed brick façade, the modest parapet and the cornice detail. The entry was modernized in glass and aluminum, replacing the original storefront with its brick pilasters and tall windows. A large, rectangular neon sign extends up to the second story.

15                      309-313 South Main    1892                      Contributing

Style: Romanesque. R. H. Barton led the construction of this hotel, The Moscow, on the site of his Barton House, which burned in 1890. The Hotel Moscow opened in 1892 and made an imposing addition to the center of a burgeoning Moscow commercial district. The brick building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. (See Photo #6)

16                      403 South Main    1891                      Contributing

Style: Romanesque. Built in 1891, the Skattaboe Block's first tenant was the Chicago Store. Jakle Jewelry and a photo studio also utilized the space before it was taken over by the local telephone company in 1966. The building is in the National Register of Historic Places. (See Photo# 7)

17                      405 South Main    c. 1925                      Noncontributing

Style: Romanesque. Fonk's Variety Store was built in the 1920s and remained in business until the 1970s. The local telephone company acquired the property and in 1978 renovated the building as an addition to the Skattaboe Block building, adding Romanesque elements of large, arched windows and brick pilasters.

18                      411 South Main    c. 1926                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This one-story building was constructed about 1926. In 1931, it housed the local electric light company office. Washington Water Power had an office here into the late 1990s. A modern storefront with sloping display windows has replaced the original. The upper façade holds an aluminum panel.

19                      415 South Main    1903                      Noncontributing

Style: Mixed. Charles B. Holt, a local cattleman, constructed his "Holt Block" in 1903. The building was used as a meat market for many years. Broad Spanish-inspired arches have been added to frame the main floor entrance of this brick building and bright orange paint continues the theme. The stepped parapet displays original materials and bears a panel with "Holt Block 1903" inscribed.

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20                      501 South Main                      c. 1903                      Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. The 1904 Sanborn map indicates the presence of this building, which became home to the Nobby Inn, a popular Moscow restaurant for many years. The one-story, brick building features simple brick decoration on its upper façade. A flat mirrored sign over the storefront carries the name of the restaurant currently in the space, under a string of windows and three mirrored panels. A modern storefront is at the lower level. A photograph c. early 1950s presents a similar appearance.

21                      505 South Main                      c. 1910                      Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Built about 1910, this building once housed the Economical Pharmacy, probably the site of Moscow's first soda fountain. The Varsity Café occupied the space for several decades beginning in the 1920s. Although a modern storefront and colorful canopy have changed the original appearance of the ground floor façade, the detailed false front with its stepped roofline exhibits brick pattern work and evokes a sense of the original building.

22                      507 South Main                      1948                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Built in 1948, this building originally housed a Coast to Coast store. The upper part of the façade displays the original brick, partially covered by a large business sign. The storefront level has been modernized with large display windows and patterned wood siding.

23                      509-511 South Main                      1947                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This brick building was constructed in 1947, probably by Henry Blanchard, who owned a cigar store at this location for many years. The storefront is dominated by large, modern display windows and three entrance doors, framed in brick detailing. A sloping metal roof/canopy extends from the flat roof.

24                      513 South Main                      c. 1948                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This building probably housed a furniture store after its construction in the late 1940s. The original brick façade is covered by the wood shake mansard-type decoration on the upper part of the façade.

25                      517-519 South Main                      c. 1960                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Probably built in the early 1960s, the brick façade of this building is largely hidden behind wood shake mansard-roof type detail.

26                      521 South Main                      1926                      Contributing

Style: Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival. John Sterner built Sterner's Studio to house his photographic studio in 1926. Its Spanish-inspired styling stands out in an area dominated by more traditional commercial buildings.

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27 525-527 South Main 1926 Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. The IOOF Lodge erected this building in 1926, on a foundation laid in 1917. The gray-brown brick façade features an arched entryway at the north end, with a starburst design transom. The second floor retains its original fenestration and transoms, with new windows set into a number of the rectangular surrounds. A parapet holds the IOOF insignia.

28 531 South Main 1916/17 Contributing

Style: Italianate. Paradise Lodge #17 of the Masons built this two-story structure in 1916 and 1917, after plans to construct a building in conjunction with the Oddfellows fell through. White brick pilasters accent the red-brick building. An arched entry at the south end remains and the upper façade retains its original fenestration. A narrow pediment bearing the Masonic emblem is centered atop the elaborate cornice.

29 533 South Main c. 1925 Noncontributing

No style. Apparently built about 1925, the original façade of this one-story brick building is covered with aluminum siding and blown pebble detail; a mansard-style aluminum roof extends over the front entrance.

30 524 South Main c. 1945 Noncontributing

No Style. The lower façade of this one-story, concrete building features large modern display windows accented by panels of rock and blown pebble. The upper façade carries a metal mansard-type roof treatment.

31 520 South Main c. 1890 Noncontributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. One of Moscow's earliest brick buildings, this structure was constructed about 1890 as a hardware and implement store; Andrew Henry was the original owner. Renovations altered the storefront and modern rectangular windows replace originals on the second floor.

32 514-518 South Main 1935 Contributing

Style: Art Deco. Milburn Kenworthy, successful Moscow movie theater owner, built this structure in 1935. The Nu Art Theater is in the National Register of Historic Places. (See Photo #9)

33 512 South Main c. 1938 Noncontributing

No Style. This building fills a narrow space between the Kenworthy and the Nu Art Theaters. Built about 1938, the brick structure has no foundation and its rafters are bolted to the walls of the buildings on each side. The brick façade has been covered by stained siding, and the original windows have been replaced. A false balcony accents the façade.

34 508 South Main 1908 Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. Milburn Kenworthy transformed the original building at this site into a Spanish Colonial Revival movie theater. Kenworthy again renovated the building in 1949, covering the former façade with terra cotta tiles in keeping with national trends in theater design. The Kenworthy is in the National Register of Historic Places and is now home to the Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre. (See Photo #12)

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35                      504 South Main                      1970                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Goodwill Industries occupies this structure, built in 1970. The one-story, brick-faced building displays large windows and an entrance door. A mansard-type shake roof accent angles away from the flat roof.

36                      408-414 South Main                      1893                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block on the north and Two-part Commercial Block on the south. Moscow merchant M. J. Shields constructed this commercial block adjacent to his store immediately to the north. The brick building's parapet held ornate pediments, and decorative brickwork accented the building's façade. These elements have been removed or covered by renovations. The structure now appears as two buildings: The section to the north is covered by tile and aluminum siding; the section to the south exhibits some of the original brickwork on the upper façade, while the storefront level is tiled.

37                      402-404 South Main                      1889                      Contributing

Style: Italianate. Early Moscow merchant M. J. Shields built the first three-story structure in Moscow here in 1889. The upper two stories retain much of their original integrity. Arched window openings are framed by segmental brick topped by keystones. (See Photo #2)

38                      316-318 South Main                      1891                      Contributing

Style: Romanesque. Leonidas B. McCartor built this imposing structure and installed his Farmers Bank here in 1891; the angled corner entrance reflects typical bank architecture. The remainder of the space held commercial enterprises. City Hall occupied the bank space beginning in 1896. Street-level renovations have modernized the storefronts and some decorative elements have been removed from the parapet, but the building retains its round arched windows and the entrance door creates an arcade effect on the Third Street façade. Pilasters highlight the corner entrance and divide the façade into multiple bays.

39                      310-312 South Main                      c.1892                      Noncontributing

Style: Romanesque. This building bears an erroneous inscription, "Carter, 1893." It was built by Leonidas B. McCartor, probably in 1892, after the completion of his building to the south. Its ornate cornice has been removed and a plain, brick second-story façade with narrow string courses and small rectangular windows replaces the original set of round-arched windows.

40                      302 South Main                      1889                      Contributing

Style: Italianate. Built in 1889, this building was an imposing addition to the growing town of Moscow. William Kaufmann and Henry Dernham constructed it to house their department store. After the turn of the century, the store was occupied by David and Ely, Inc., and eventually became David's. (See Photo #3)

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41                      218 South Main                      c. 1909                      Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. George Creighton built this building in about 1909, and the Corner Drug occupied the space for several decades. After a 1940s fire, the structure was renovated. The two-story, brick building has large display windows and a recessed, corner entry on the ground level; fluted aluminum columns cover original entry-framing pillars. The second story displays a row of rectangular windows and rises to a straight parapet roofline. The renovations illustrate the transition from original building to 1940s-era commercial structure.

42                      212-214 South Main                      1898                      Noncontributing

No Style. Part of the Spicer Block built in 1898, which extended from 202 through 214 S. Main, this building became a separate entity with renovation following a 1950s fire, and subsequent changes have further covered the structure's characteristics.

43                      206-210 South Main                      1898/1953                      Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. The Spicer Block, built in 1898, encompassed this space; after a 1950s fire, this section was completely rebuilt. The inscription "O'Connor Building 1953" is centered in a brick string course that spans the width of the building. Dark blue ceramic tile panels surround the entrances on the ground level. (See Photo #13)

44                      204 South Main                      1898                      Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. This section of the original Spicer Block, built in 1898, is most reflective of the design of that building. After a 1953 fire, the Spicer Block was renovated, essentially creating three separate buildings; this part became the Crossley Building. The renovated storefront replaced the original entrances and windows, but the upper facade retains lunettes and fan-shaped, corner, decorative elements that once stretched across the Spicer Blocks' five storefront bays. This section once held the Spokane and Eastern Bank, later called First Trust and Savings.

45                      116 South Main                      1890                      Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. Built by Robert Browne to house the Moscow National Bank, this two-story brick building has a corner entrance. A concrete band separates the first and second stories; original fenestration remains; transoms in the arched windows have been plastered over. The building has held the Latah County Title Company since 1936.

46                      110 South Main                      1891                      Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. This structure was built in 1891 by Robert Browne, president of Moscow National Bank, to match the building to the south. The storefront has been modernized to include large windows; the current owner removed sheet metal on the upper façade to expose brick and second-story windows. The arched windows, frieze, and decorative cornice blend with that of its companion building.



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47 102-106 South Main 1891 Contributing

Style: Italianate. William J. McConnell and James H. McGuire constructed this building in 1891 to hold their retail store business, which failed in 1893. Nathaniel Williamson reinstated a department store here in 1904. The upper floors were converted to the Thatuna Apartments in 1928. In the 1980s, the McConnell Building underwent restoration and is now in the National Register of Historic Places. (See Photo #4)

48 405-407 South Washington c. 1920 Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Sanborn maps indicate this building was constructed before 1928. In 1931, a cabinet shop and an auto garage did business here. (See Photo #10)

49 110 East Second c. 1895 Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Built about 1895, this building held John Taylor's real estate office and a shoe repair shop in 1922. Remodeling in the 1980s resulted in a modern storefront and plain brick façade.

50 115 East Second 1924 Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. The brick rectangular section at the west end of this structure was built in 1924; the brick section with garage doors extending to the east was built sometime between 1928 and 1955. Remodeling in the 1970s changed its appearance from the original. From the 1920s to the 1950s, a number of businesses in the district provided automobile services; this is the only remaining of such businesses in the area.

51 114-120 East Third c. 1905 Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. David Urquhart built this structure between 1904 and 1909; a variety of stores and offices occupied space here. The building underwent modernization in 1955, but the second story retains original elements including ornate brickwork.

52 122-124 East Third c. 1916 Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This tan brick building features a simple string course under cornice. Built about 1916, this building housed Milburn Kenworthy's Vandal Theater from 1918 until 1926.

53 128 East Third c. 1913. Contributing

Commercial: Two-part Commercial Block. The Oberg brothers built a one-story structure here to house their general store; at some point, a second story was added. The store became Oberg and Anderson in 1931 and remained in business until 1958. (See Photo # 11)

54 125 East Third 1909 Contributing

Style: Two-part Commercial Block. Frank Cornwall built this building in 1909 to hold his offices; a music store also occupied part of the space. The brick structure has a modern storefront topped by a string of modern windows. The upper façade reveals original design; a wide band highlighted with brick corbelling appears under the cornice. The building's upper façade illustrates the progression of the Cornwall buildings on Third Street.

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55                      121-123 East Third                      1893                      Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Mason and Frank Cornwall and George Langdon built this one-story, brick building in 1893, as an extension to the Cornwall Block, immediately to the west. On the east, the upper façade displays ornate, brick corbelling. The western section displays a new aluminum and glass storefront topped by narrow windows, probably in original wooden surrounds. Brick corbelling similar to detail on the adjoining section appears below the cornice. A white brick pilaster marks the building's western corner.

56                      113-117 East Third                      1890                      Contributing

Style: Italianate. Mason Cornwall built this structure as a three-story building in 1890. After a fire on the third floor in 1904, it was converted to two stories. Cast-iron pediments frame one of three entrances and appear at one side of another. Brick pediments rise to the cornice line. Original fenestration remains on the second floor, with new windows in original surrounds. The Cornwall Block inscription appears under the cornice on the corner entry space of the building. (See Photo #5).

57                      118 East Fourth                      c. 1940                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This one-story building is sided with blown pebble panels, probably a result of the 1960 modernization. This building housed Idaho Dairy Products until the 1960s, when the police station was established here.

58                      119 East Fourth                      c. 1967                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. A large, recessed entry highlights this one-story, concrete building. Pilaster-like details divide the façade into four bays.

59                      114 East Fifth                      c. 1928                      Noncontributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. This one-story, building may represent the enlargement of a more narrow structure. The current footprint appears on the 1928/55 Sanborn map as an auto repair shop. The blown pebble veneer hides the original appearance.

60                      114 E Sixth                      c. 1930                      Contributing

Style: One-part Commercial Block. Constructed of brick, this one-story, rectangular building has a steeply pitched false front. Window openings have been sealed and contain full-length advertisements. A dry-cleaning store in the 1950s, the structure now houses a tavern.<sup>1</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Descriptions and historic information provided in Inventory List in Suzanne Julin's, "Moscow Downtown Commercial Historic District Reconnaissance Survey," May, 2004. Copies held by Idaho State Historic Preservation Office and City of Moscow.

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## Narrative Statement of Significance

The Moscow Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A (Commerce/Trade) because of its association with the growth and development of Moscow, Idaho, as a regional trade center. The district includes sixty buildings, each of which was built as a commercial or financial structure. During the period of significance, 1889 to 1953, this commercial district developed and changed in response to economic and social forces, including early settlement and prosperity; the Panic of 1893; the coming of the automobile age; and the Great Depression. Because only eight of the district's buildings were constructed after 1953, the district retains a high percentage of the commercial structures from the period of significance. The massing, placement, and rooflines recall the evolution of the district, and the number of imposing structures that retain excellent integrity represents the peak of its boom period in the 1890s.

Moscow is a community of about 22,000 people located in northern Idaho's panhandle. The city is situated in the Palouse region of eastern Washington and western Idaho, an area comprising more than one million acres of rolling hills and deep loess soil particularly suited to wheat production. Timbered hills appear to the north and east. Home to the University of Idaho, Moscow serves as a center for trade, culture and social life for the city, the university community and surrounding small towns. As county seat of Latah County, Moscow also provides governmental functions for county residents.

## Settlement and Early Growth

Moscow's history is strongly linked to the agricultural resources of the Palouse. Before white settlement, the Nez Perce Indians routinely visited the area in late spring to harvest camas. As fortune-seekers flocked to mineral discoveries in the 1860s, and lands to the west attracted settlers, the agricultural promise of the Palouse country began to draw attention. Significant immigration into the area around Moscow began in the 1870s, and by the mid-1880s, most of the prime farmland had been settled.<sup>1</sup>

Several of these early settlers were responsible for the founding of Moscow. Almon Asbury Lieuallen, a native of Tennessee, originally migrated to Oregon and then came to the present-day Moscow area, known as Paradise Valley, where he claimed land in 1871. In 1875, he bought another homesteader's claim and established a general store at what is now the corner of First and Main in Moscow. His property and that of three other area pioneers—James Deakin, Henry McGregor, and John Russell—met at the present-day Sixth and South Main. About 1876, each of the men donated thirty acres of land for Moscow's townsite. In 1878, surveyor O. L. Wolford platted Main and Washington Streets from A Street to Sixth Street. Main Street was originally platted at eighty feet wide, but property owners agreed to expand the street to ninety-three feet. The wide street provided a spacious setting for the commercial development to come.<sup>2</sup>

The new town quickly developed into a trade center for area residents, eclipsing Lewiston, an older town about thirty miles to the south. Lewiston had served as a base for supplying miners and farmers since the mid-1860s and was Idaho Territory's first capital. The trip from the Palouse country to Lewiston, however, could be harrowing and expensive; travelers had to descend the steep grade of the two-thousand foot Lewiston Hill and then take a commercial ferry over the Clearwater River to reach the town.<sup>3</sup> Moscow answered the need of the rapidly growing population for a convenient market center.

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That need was fulfilled not only through convenient access, but also by the creativity of entrepreneurs who developed Moscow's early business district. Michael J. Shields arrived in 1878 and established his M. J. Shields Company on the southeast corner of Fourth and South Main the following year. He developed a flourishing business by selling hardware, carriages, and stoves. William J. McConnell also came to Moscow in 1878. A native of Michigan, he lived in California, southwestern Idaho Territory and Oregon before settling in Moscow. He went into partnership with James McGuire and the two developed a successful retail business in a large wooden building on the southeast corner of First and South Main. The large amount of goods the businessmen offered the public helped to draw trade to Moscow and stimulated other business development.<sup>4</sup>

Additional factors encouraged Moscow's commercial growth. In 1885, the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company reached the young city, improving transportation and access to goods and supplies. The town incorporated in 1887, with William J. McConnell serving as the first chairman of the board of trustees. The next year, a bold political move brought new status to the city. The area was part of Nez Perce County, with Lewiston as the county seat. Moscow forces believed Lewiston was too inconvenient for the local population and agitated for an election to divide the county. The votes were in favor of retaining Nez Perce County, however, and the decision prompted area politicians to turn to Congress. That body created Latah County, the only county in the country created by an act of Congress. Moscow became its county seat. In 1889, the territorial legislature named Moscow as the site of the territorial university, a decision McConnell and other Latah County politicians solidified the next year by writing the location into the Idaho's constitution. By the time Idaho became a state in 1890, Moscow had more than 2,000 residents and was established as a center for trade, local government, and higher education.<sup>5</sup>

## Boom and Bust: 1885-1893

Moscow's successes fostered optimism about its future that translated into dramatic changes in the built environment. Between 1885 and 1893, nearly a third of the buildings now present in this district were constructed; they comprise the most imposing group of commercial and financial buildings in the community.

The earliest Moscow buildings were primarily wood structures. As the town became more prosperous and local production of bricks developed, brick buildings became the norm. In about 1891, the city passed an ordinance forbidding the construction of wooden buildings in the commercial area of Main Street, further increasing the need for brick. A Mr. Simmons advertised bricks for delivery as early as 1881. William Taylor fired bricks from clay on his farm south of Moscow for construction use. The firm of Lauder and Clough, building contractors and dealers in construction materials, noted the anticipated production of 200,000 bricks during the summer of 1885. Shortly after the turn of the century, Lauder and a new partner, Frank White, built a new brickyard and subsequently sold the business to Theodore Graham. In 1916, Thomas Hall began to develop and manage the Moscow Fire Brick and Clay Products Company, producing various grades of brick drain tile and ceramic tile. This plant produced most of the brick used in local construction until the mid-1940s, when the operation was destroyed by fire.<sup>6</sup>

Moscow's downtown is dominated by brick buildings, and the burst of construction that still defines the commercial district began in 1889, when Michael J. Shields replaced his original store at the corner of Fourth and South Main with the city's first three-story, brick structure. Two years later, he constructed a one-story, brick building that stretched from his business to Fifth Street. Shields expanded his hardware enterprise to sell farm implements, building materials, and mill machinery. He also operated a contracting business and established the city's electric system, eventually developing Idaho-Washington Light and Power. Also in 1889, William Kaufmann and Henry Dernham built a large, two-story, brick building at 302 South Main to house their U.S. Wholesale and

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Retail General Merchandise Store. The two men were married to sisters and came to Moscow in about 1880 to open a general store. They acquired significant property holdings in the city, and their imposing store building represented their success.

Several more significant brick buildings that remain in this historic district were constructed in 1890. Among them is the southern section of the Browne Block at 110 South Main. Browne, a cashier at the First National Bank, founded the Moscow National Bank and built this structure to house it. The next year, he built the section to the north, designing it to blend with the original building. Isaac Hattabaugh, president of the Commercial Bank, built the Commercial Block at 213-215 South Main to house his enterprise. The two-story building held the bank in the southern part of its first floor and the *Star of Idaho*, a newspaper, in the north side; offices occupied the second floor. Mason Cornwall erected the ornate, three-story Cornwall Block at 113-117 East Third, the most imposing of the commercial buildings to be constructed off Main. Cornwall was also a banker, serving as president of the Bank of Moscow, which occupied the building's ground-level space at its corner entrance.<sup>8</sup>

The following year, 1891, saw the greatest burst of the period's building boom. Charles S. Smith and Charles H. Dolson built their two-story building at 211 South Main to hold their general store and offices on the second floor. Leonidas B. McCartor constructed his McCartor Block, located on the east side of South Main's 300 block, in two sections. The southern part held his Farmers Bank as well as various businesses including the Chicago Bargain House. The northern section was rented to Dernham and Kaufmann who used it for their vehicle and furniture departments. Kenneth Skattaboe, a prominent local farmer and businessman, built the Skattaboe Block at the southwest corner of Fourth and Main. George Creighton's general store and a grocery occupied the ground floor. The second floor held offices as well as living space for the Skattaboe family, who resided there in the winter to allow their children to comfortably reach their school in Moscow. Directly across Fourth Street, Robert H. Barton constructed a three-story hotel, The Moscow. Barton came to Moscow in 1877 and established an early sawmill. He built Moscow's first hotel at this site, but the frame building burned in 1890. The elaborate new hotel contained shops and a bar on the ground level with the hotel rooms above. By the end of 1891, the corners of Fourth and South Main held four grand structures: The Moscow, the Skattaboe Block, the McCartor Block, and the Shields Building. Within a few short years, Moscow's downtown had taken on a prosperous, urbanized image.<sup>9</sup>

That image was further enhanced by the 1891 construction of the city's most magnificent commercial building. William J. McConnell and James H. McGuire, whose mercantile business had succeeded admirably, constructed a new home for their enterprise at the southeast corner of First and South Main. Built of granite with cast-iron supports and unique ornamentation, the three-story building represented the firm's business success as well as the prestige of W. J. McConnell, who had just finished a term as U. S. Senator and would become the state's governor in 1893. The building held an undertaking department on the third floor and employed around twenty seamstresses in its dressmaking department. The company sold dry goods, clothing, hardware, stoves, wallpaper and home decorations, pianos, farm implements, wagons, groceries, and a host of other products.<sup>10</sup> The owners advertised it as "the Only Complete Department Store in the Northwest."<sup>11</sup>

Other, more modest buildings were constructed during this period, but the erection of structures like the McConnell-McGuire store, The Moscow, and the Cornwall, Browne, McCartor, and Skattaboe Blocks brought a sense of permanence and prosperity to the young town. With a population of more than two thousand, designations as the county seat and the location of the state university, a thriving business district, and one of the state's most influential politicians as a driving force in the city's development, Moscow's continued success seemed assured. But in 1893, the years of unrestrained optimism and rapid growth came to an abrupt end. Problems in the nation's economy had surfaced as early as 1890, when the failure of a prominent British

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banking house affected financial interests in the United States. Unrest in the mining industry, including in Idaho, was precipitated by wage cuts, and created more unease. In May of 1893, the huge National Cordage Company failed and the stock market subsequently collapsed. Banks, businesses, and railroads across the country began to go under, and unemployment reached catastrophic levels. In the Palouse country, the national crisis was exacerbated by a cold, wet summer resulting in widespread crop failure. Farmers, the mainstay of the area's economy, suddenly had little to contribute.<sup>12</sup>

The Panic of 1893 devastated Moscow's commercial and financial communities. The most stunning failure occurred in late April, when the McConnell-McGuire Company went out of business even before the stock market crash. The *Moscow Mirror* reported that the firm's problems were rooted in heavy investments in wheat and subsequent losses due to falling prices. Governor McConnell suffered significant personal reverses. The Smith-Dolson firm also fell victim to the financial depression. Dernham and Kaufman survived the crisis, but apparently their attempts to collect from farmers during hard times turned customers against them, and they left Moscow in the late 1890s. Robert Barton's financial problems may have forced him to sell The Moscow. Michael J. Shields had to reorganize his company. The Commercial Bank closed in 1894, the Farmers Bank closed in 1896, and the Moscow National Bank failed in the mid-1890s. While some financial institutions and leading businesses survived, the financial crisis tempered the optimism of Moscow's businessmen. When building resumed, the scale was more modest.<sup>13</sup>

### Recovery and a New Century

The years of heady optimism were over, but a more measured growth followed. Local historian Simon K. Benson noted that within ten years of the financial panic and the crop failure, Latah County went from "poverty to affluence, from depression to prosperity."<sup>14</sup> Agriculture rebounded as the weather stabilized and prices began to increase. By the early twentieth century, wheat was the state's most valuable crop, and the area surrounding Moscow among its most productive. In addition, northern Latah County contained a rich resource in white pine, and timbering there began in earnest in the early twentieth century, increasing employment and population in areas that depended on Moscow as a source of goods and supplies.<sup>15</sup>

Moscow's leading mercantile enterprise had been lost in 1893, but after a brief recovery period the city continued to exhibit the signs of a successful trade center. In 1898, William H. Spicer built the Spicer Block, which extended for three quarters of the east side of the 200 block of Main. The one-story, plastered brick building had five separate store fronts and at one point contained the local branch of the Spokane and Eastern Bank. The reorganized Shields Co., Ltd. remained successful in selling hardware and machinery and operating construction businesses and planing mills. An Irish immigrant and colorful entrepreneur, Nathaniel Williamson, set up shop in the Shield's one-story building on the 400 block of South Main. He promoted his Greater Boston Store with attention-getting events including the Greater Boston Horse Show and a series of Great Fall Fairs, as well as eye-striking signage. In 1913, he leased the McConnell-McGuire building, moved his business to that site, and filled all three floors with furniture, men's and women's clothing, and home furnishings. He installed a large electric sign bearing the name "Williamson's," and each Christmas he brought in a huge Christmas tree and held a contest to guess the tree's height. He also leased the northern part of the adjoining Browne Block and set up a restaurant, grocery, and hardware department. He closed his business when his lease expired in 1920. The building stood empty for several years until the upper floors were remodeled as apartments in 1928. The Thatuna Apartments provided downtown living to Moscow residents for fifty years, until a renovation and restoration returned it to commercial use.<sup>16</sup>

Williamson's efforts at promotion were not misplaced, for he faced formidable competition. About 1897, George Creighton and Foster Hall moved their Chicago Store from the Skattaboe Block into the Smith-Dolson building,

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with an extensive stock of dry goods and up-to-date technology that carried cash from each department to the main cashier's post. Creighton later bought the building and renamed the business Creighton's; the business survived into the 1980s. Frank David, who was manager of the McConnell-McGuire store when it failed, opened the Badger Store at 203 South Main in 1896, later moving to the Spicer Block. In 1899, he and his partner, Washington Ely, bought the former Dernham and Kaufmann building and established the David and Ely store. The David family acquired full rights to the company about 1919, and their department store, David's, continued in business until 1979. The three-story building sold clothing and home furnishings. Therefore, several of the significant buildings constructed during the boom period were reclaimed as important commercial sites, and Moscow's merchandising climate resumed much of its former vibrancy.<sup>17</sup>

Commercial building also revived in the early twentieth century, although on a more modest level than the previous building boom. The one-story, brick Holt Block, built in 1903 at 413 South Main, originally held an outgrowth of Charles Holt's butcher business. A one-story, brick building constructed at 505 South Main about 1910 housed the Economical Pharmacy, including an early soda fountain. The Pastime Pool Hall, a one-story, concrete-block building at 113 South Main, built in 1909, served as a convivial spot for men and a location for hiring temporary or seasonal labor. In 1911, the Masonic Temple was constructed at 531 South Main; the two-story, brick building contained commercial space on its ground floor, with lodge rooms on the second floor. Third Street also developed more fully during this period. In 1909, Frank Cornwall completed his plans for extensions to his Cornwall Block by building a one-story, brick building at the southwest corner of Third and Washington, and housed real estate offices and a music store. David Urquhart constructed a brick building at 114-120 East Third about 1905. The five Oberg brothers, former employees of David and Ely, operated a general store here until 1913, when they built their own store on the northwest corner of this block. Originally one-story, the brick structure was later expanded to two floors. The Obergs sold clothing, dry goods, and groceries and remained in business as Oberg and Anderson until the late 1950s.<sup>18</sup>

Newspaper ads from mid-1913 illustrate the wide range of goods available to Moscow area shoppers, as well as the competition among the enterprises offering them. The Oberg Brothers advertised their usual mid-summer clearance sale to begin on June 25 and continue for fifteen days. Boy's suits, generally selling from \$3.00 to \$7.50, were marked down to \$2.25 to \$5.50. Women's gloves were reduced from \$1.25 to 98 cents; canned salmon would go for ten cents and coffee, usually priced at 40 cents per pound, was on sale for just 35 cents.<sup>19</sup> Williamson's, "The Store of A Thousand Doings," touted its Anniversary Sale as "The Talk of the Country and the Talk of the Town" and reported that a traveling salesman who dropped in noted that "A store with this stock and at these prices in San Francisco, St. Paul, Chicago, Seattle or Portland simply would be swamped."<sup>20</sup> During its sale, Williamson's offered prizes for drawings based on receipt slips, including a kitchen range, a couch, and a rocking chair.<sup>21</sup> David and Ely's advertised their annual Yellow Triangle sale and asked shoppers, "Have you been among the thrifty ones? . . . If not, can you afford to miss this sale longer." Their ad offered ladies' suits for \$11.50 and a twenty-five per cent discount on every man's and boy's suit in the store.<sup>22</sup> Moscow's commercial district offered area shoppers a wide array of choices and the competitive climate reinforced the town's reputation as a business center.

### Automobiles and Entertainment

The look of the downtown commercial area began to change in the late teens and twenties as the automobile came into common use. The 1928 Sanborn Map for Moscow shows automobile-related businesses on the 100 and 500 blocks of Main, on East Second, and occupying the entire 100 block of Washington. In the 1960s and 1970s, as traffic was rerouted around the downtown, these businesses faded away. Only Martin's Auto Service at the southwest corner of Second and Washington remains as a downtown automobile-related business.

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Established in the 1920s as an Oldsmobile dealership, Martin's was remodeled in the 1970s, changing its original appearance.<sup>23</sup>

Movie theaters were another business development that affected the face of downtown, reflected changes in society, and diverted from Moscow's emphasis on retail stores. The first theater in Moscow was probably the Crystal Theater, built on the east side of the 500 block of Main in 1908, but soon converted to an auto garage and service business. The prominence of theaters in the downtown is due to Milburn Kenworthy, who came to Moscow in 1918 after a career in live theater. He leased the Strand Theater at 122 East Third and named it the Kenworthy. In 1925, Kenworthy acquired the former Crystal Theater building, lengthened it by adding a stage to the rear, and remodeled it with a Spanish Colonial Revival facade. He named this theater the Kenworthy and renamed his theater on Third Street the Vandal (after the University of Idaho mascot). In 1928, he acquired the lot to the south of the Kenworthy and expanded the theater by fourteen feet. Shortly afterwards, he installed a sound system, and on August 9, 1929, Moscow audiences saw their first "talkie."<sup>24</sup> The design of the building was nearly mirrored by a building almost directly across the street, and also related to the arts. John J. Sterner operated a photography studio at 521 South Main beginning in 1904, and built a new structure on the site in 1926. The small structure with its shaped parapet and red tile roof was a departure from the usual Main Street building.<sup>25</sup>

Milburn Kenworthy provided another addition to Main Street when he built the Nu Art Theater to the south of the Kenworthy. One of the few buildings constructed in the business district during the Great Depression, the Art Deco, air-conditioned theater opened in November, 1935, to enthusiastic audiences. Besides offering movies, the building held a candy store and the local Western Union Office. Both the Kenworthy and the Nu Art continued to serve Moscow residents until the 1990s.<sup>26</sup>

### The Great Depression and the Forties and Fifties

Milburn Kenworthy's Nu Art Theater was one of the few buildings constructed in the downtown area during the Depression. Moscow residents, like their counterparts across the United States, suffered from the effects of a faltering financial structure, unemployment, and low farm prices. One bright spot in the city's economy came from an unlikely source: Frank Robinson's Psychiana, a type of mail order religion. Robinson came to Moscow in the 1920s and operated Psychiana from about 1929 until his death in 1948. Robinson's enterprise employed more people than any other private business during the Depression, mainly women who prepared the mailings. Psychiana elevated Moscow's post office to first-class status because of the volume of mail it generated.<sup>27</sup>

The war years, like the Depression years, saw few buildings constructed in the downtown. In the late forties, however, several one-story structures were built in the 500 block of Main. In addition, Milburn Kenworthy changed the Kenworthy Theater in 1949 to reflect modern theater design. The remodeling applied ceramic tiles to the brick façade and installed a glass and metal lobby entrance with display windows and a ticket booth. A triangular marquee holding a large neon "K" completed the transformation from the former Spanish-inspired theater to a sleek new look.<sup>28</sup>

In the early 1950s, downtown Moscow remained a busy place. About 1950, two local men made plans to develop a shopping center on the south side of East Third's 200 block, partly as a response to "the local parking problem,"<sup>29</sup> indicating the area continued to attract people to its goods and services. A major fire partially destroyed one of Main Streets pre-1900 buildings and set the stage for changes in South Main's 200 block. The fire began early in the morning of January 31, 1953, in Shorty's Place at 206 South Main—part of the Spicer Block built in 1898. Smoke engulfed the area, and the fire spread into the southern sections of the Spicer Block. As a



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result of the fire, the central section of the Spicer Block was rebuilt in 1953 and named the O'Connor Building for its owners.<sup>30</sup>

During the ensuing decades, other transformations came to downtown. Three new banks were erected in the area, and a large office complex went up on the northwest corner of First and Washington. In the late 1970s, a trend toward modernization, in part an attempt to compete with shopping centers developing on Moscow's periphery, resulted in changes to the facades of many buildings.<sup>31</sup> The historic fabric of the district, however, continues to define the downtown. The buildings from the early 1890s serve as anchors and those constructed in the following decades provide a visual history of the district's commercial development.

### Summary of Significance

About 1897, W. G. Emery, a local photographer, looked down Moscow's Main Street business district and remarked, "To stand at the north end of this principal street and look south without having a knowledge of the population of the city, one would think, judging from the palatial business brick buildings to be seen, that it might be a city of ten or fifteen thousand people."<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the "palatial buildings;" the densely built downtown; the brick structures dating as early as the late 1880s; and the graceful, wide street do give the impression that this city was a minor metropolis during its boom. That image reflects the drive and the optimism of the city's early business leaders, who demonstrated their faith in Moscow by building imposing structures like the McConnell-McGuire Building, the Dernham-Kaufmann Building and the Skattaboe Block, The Moscow, and the Cornwall Building. The Panic of 1893 and the agricultural crisis of that year changed the trajectory of development in Moscow's downtown; more modest in nature, the brick buildings erected in the following decades continued to display craftsmanship, the individual tastes and needs of their owners, and the demands of the area's consumers. To look down Main Street is to look at a commercial district whose physical shape has changed little in the last fifty years. The buildings reflect the ambitions of pioneers and the efforts of small entrepreneurs who developed this commercial district over several decades.

### Endnotes

1. Marvin Jagels, "Latah County, Idaho," unpublished manuscript, 1954, Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho, Section II, p. 1; J. H. Agee, George W. Graves, and C. B. Mickelwaite, "Soil Survey of Latah County, Idaho," (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1917), p. 5.
2. Julie Monroe, *Moscow: Living and Learning on the Palouse* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia, 2003), pp. 7, 27-29; Homer David, *Moscow at the Turn of the Century*, Local History Paper #6 (Moscow: Latah County Historical Society, 1979), p. 57.
3. Michael C. Moore, *Frontier Lewiston: 1861-1890*, Gene Mueller, ed. (N.P., 1980). This is one of a series of booklets about Lewiston history printed in 1980.

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4. Lillian Ottness, *A Great Good Country: A Guide to Historic Moscow and Latah County, Idaho* (Moscow: Latah County Historical Society, Inc., 1983), pp. 13-14, 28-29; Julie Monroe, *Moscow: Living and Learning on the Palouse*, p. 35-36; Keith Petersen, "Toward Idaho's Centennial—The Boosters of Moscow," *Idaho Yesterdays* Vol. 31: 3, (Fall 1987), p. 24.
5. Lillian Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, p. 8; Keith Petersen, "Toward Idaho's Centennial," pp. 25-31.
6. "Making of Brick Earliest Industrial Endeavor Here," Unidentified newspaper clipping, Moscow History File, Latah County Historical Society, Moscow, Idaho; Lillian Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, p. 30.
7. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 22-23, 28-30; "City's Two Early Merchants Lived in B Street Houses," *Moscow Idahonian*, October 13, 1955, in Moscow History File, Latah County Historical Society.
8. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 15, 19, 42-43.
9. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 18, 24-28. The First National Bank was also built in 1891 at 301 South Main, but was demolished in 1965. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, p. 22.
10. Don Hibbard, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, McConnell-McGuire [sic] Building, November 2, 1977; Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 13-14; McConnell McGuire Company ad, *Moscow Mirror*, August 5, 1892.
11. McConnell McGuire Company ad, *Moscow Mirror*, August 5, 1892.
12. Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1987), pp. 116-117; D. E. Livingston-Little, *An Economic History of North Idaho, 1800-1900* (Lorrin L. Morrison and Carrol Spear Morrison, Publishers, for *Journal of the West*, 1965), pp. 53, 57-58.
13. "Moscow Failure," *Moscow Mirror*, April 28, 1893; Monroe, *Moscow: Living and Learning on the Palouse*, p. 85; W. C. Emery, "A History of Moscow, Idaho," *Latah County Historical Quarterly*, Volume 8: 4, pp. 33-34; Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 15, 18, 19, 23, 25-29; David, *Moscow at the Turn of the Century*, pp. 8-9.
14. Simon K. Benson, *History of No. Idaho, Latah County: Troy Moscow Genesee Deary Bovill Potlatch Kendrick Juliaetta Princeton Harvard Stanford Yale Vassar Onaway Avon Helmer Viola Joel* (Provo, Utah: N. P., 1973), p. 94.
15. Benson, *History of No. Idaho*, p. 118; Hiram T. French, *History of Idaho: A Narrative Account of Its Historical Progress, Its People and Its Principal Interests* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1914), pp. 323-324; Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, p. 4; Monroe, *Moscow: Living and Learning on the Palouse*, pp. 86-87.
16. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 13-14, 21, 29-30; Frank Williamson, "A Biography of Nathaniel Williamson," in Clifford Ott Collection, Book 3, Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho, pp. 1-10; Keith Peterson, "Moscow History at First and Main," *Moscow Idahonian*, May 10, 1978.
17. Williamson, "A Biography of Nathaniel Williamson," p. 5; Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 17-18, 23, 28.

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18. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, pp. 16, 31-32, 35, 43-44.
19. Oberg Bros. Co. ad, *Moscow Daily Star-Mirror*, June 24, 1913.
20. Williamson's Ad, *Moscow Daily Star-Mirror*, July 17, 1913.
21. Williamson's ad, *Moscow Daily Star-Mirror*, July 15, 1913.
22. David and Ely's ad, *Moscow Daily Star-Mirror*, July 10, 1913.
23. Sanborn Map Company, Moscow, Latah County, Idaho, 1928; Clifford Ott Collection, Book 9, Photographs 131 and 132, Special Collections, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho; "Moscow Sprucing Up," Spokane, Washington *Daily Chronicle*, August 8, 1977, Moscow History File, Latah County Historical Society.
24. Suzanne Julin and Diane Krahe, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Kenworthy Theater, May 22, 2001.
25. Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, p. 34.
26. Suzanne Julin and Diane Krahe, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Nu Art Theater, May 22, 2001; Julin and Krahe, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Kenworthy Theater, May 22, 2001.
27. Monroe, *Moscow: Living and Learning on the Palouse*, 125-129. Keith Peterson discusses Psychiana and its founder in *Psychiana: The Psychological Religion* (Moscow: Latah County Historical Society, 1991).
28. Latah County Assessors office records indicate that the buildings at 507 South Main, 509-511 South Main and 513 South Main were built in the 1940s. Julin and Krahe, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Kenworthy Theater, May 22, 2001.
29. "\$250,000 Shop Center is Plan Here," Unidentified newspaper article, no date. Moscow History File, Latah County Historical Society.
30. "Morning Basement Fire Routs Business Block, *Moscow Daily Idahonian*, January 31, 1953; Ottness, *A Great Good Country*, p. 21.
31. "Moscow Sprucing Up," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 8, 1977. Moscow History File, Latah County Historical Society.
32. W. G. Emery, *History of Moscow, Idaho* (Moscow: The Moscow Mirror [1897]), p. 4.

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### Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning on First Street at the alley between Jackson and Main, proceeding east to alley between Main and Washington, then south to Second, then east to the center of Washington Street, then south to Fifth Street, then west to the alley between Main and Washington, then South to the middle of Sixth Street, then West to the alley between Jackson and Main, which forms the western boundary.

**Justification:** This boundary contains the core commercial area of Moscow's downtown period of significance. All buildings within the boundary during that period were constructed for commerce, trade, or financial use.

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## Photographs

Photographer: Suzanne Julin  
Location of Negatives: Idaho State Historic Preservation Office

1. April 24, 2004  
Commercial Block/Forney Building, looking West  
213-215 South Main
2. April 25, 2004  
Shields Building North, looking Southeast  
402-404 South Main
3. April 25, 2004  
Dernham and Kaufmann/David's, looking Southeast  
302 South Main
4. April 25, 2004  
McConnell-McGuire Building, looking Southeast  
102-106 South Main
5. May 23, 2004  
Cornwall Block, looking Southeast  
113-117 East Third
6. April 24, 2004  
The Moscow, looking Northwest  
309-313 South Main
7. April 24, 2004  
Skattaboe Block, looking Southwest  
403-405 South Main
8. April 25, 2004  
Sterner's Photography Studio, looking Northwest  
521 South Main
9. April 25, 2004  
Nu Art Theater, looking East  
514-518 South Main
10. April 25, 2004  
405-407 Washington, looking West

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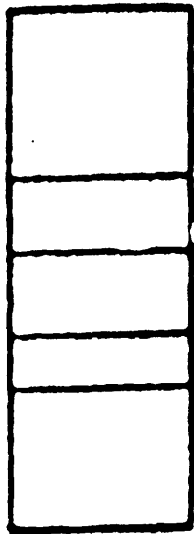
Section number Photos Page 2 Name of Property Moscow Downtown Historic District  
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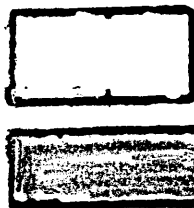
11. May 23, 2004  
Oberg Brothers Store, looking North  
128 East Third
12. April 25, 2004  
Kenworthy Theater, looking East  
508 South Main
13. April 25, 2004  
O'Connor Building, looking east  
206-210 South Main
14. May 23, 2004  
Streetscape: 100 Block South Main, east side, looking Northeast
15. May 23, 2004  
Streetscape: 500 Block South Main, east side, looking Southeast



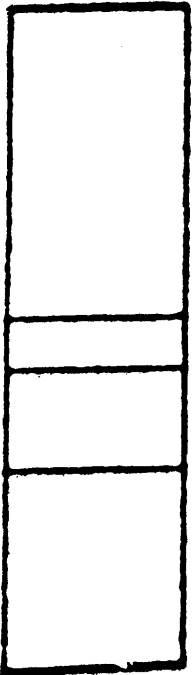
JACKSON STREET



1	105
2	107
3	111
4	175
5	201
6	203
7	205
8	207
9	211
10	213-18
11	217-19
12	221



13	301
14	307
15	301-13



16	403
17	405
18	411
19	415
20	501
21	505
22	507
23	509-11
24	513
25	517-19
26	521
27	525-27
28	531
29	533

(F)

STREET

(H)

(I)

(J)

(K)

MAIN

(L)

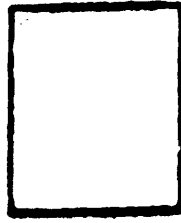
(M)

(N)

(O)

FIRST

102-06	47
110	46
116	45-49
	110



SECOND

201	49
205-7	48
212-14	42
218	41

50	115
51	52
52	53
53	54

THIRD

302	40
310-12	39
316-18	38

55	56
57	58
59	118

FOURTH

407-09	37
408-14	36

581	119
48	106
591	114

FIFTH

504	35
508	34
512	33
514-16	32
520	31
524	30



SIXTH


WASHINGTON STREET


(10)



MOSCOW DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Based on City of Moscow Address Map Not to Scale

Contributing 

Noncontributing 

Map #

Photograph Vantage Point