

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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JUN - 3 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: From 135 to 245 and 250 to 358 High Street; 10 Journal Square; from 9 to 21 N. Third Street; from 6 S. to 222 S. Second Street; from 2 to 306 and 11 to 301 S. Third Street; from 105 to 309 and 224 to 234 Court Street; 311 and 316 Ludlow Street; 315 Maple Street; and , from 19 to 111 S. Front Street.

City or town: Hamilton State: Ohio County: Butler

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

<p><i>Barbara Power</i> DSHPO Inventory & Registration <u>May 26, 2014</u></p> <p>Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date</p> <p><u>State Historic Preservation Office/Ohio Historical Society</u></p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	
<p>In my opinion, the property <u>X</u> meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official: _____ Date</p>	
<p>_____ Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Jon Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

7-19-16
Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>36</u>	<u>10</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>37</u>	<u>10</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

- Commerce/business
- Commerce/specialty store
- Commerce/restaurant
- Government/courthouse
- Government/post office
- Recreation and Culture/auditorium

Current Functions

- Commerce/business
- Commerce/specialty store
- Commerce/restaurant
- Government/courthouse
- Government/post office
- Recreation and Culture/auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification

- Mid-Nineteenth Century/Gothic Revival
- Late Victorian/Italianate
- Late Victorian/Renaissance
- Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Revivals/Beaux Arts
- Modern Movement/Art Deco
- Modern Movement/Modernistic, Meisian

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Stone, Wood, Concrete, Glass, Metal

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Summary Paragraph

The Hamilton Downtown Historic District comprises 49 resources located along High Street, Court Street, Ludlow Street, Maple Street, South Front Street, South Second Street and North and South Third Street in downtown Hamilton. Hamilton, which has a population of about 62,000 residents, is the seat of Butler County, Ohio. The city is located on the banks of the Great Miami River, which flows about one block to the west of the historic district. The historic district encompasses an area of about 18 acres and includes 39 contributing resources (including 2 previously listed) and 10 non-contributing resources. The district includes two National Register listed buildings, namely the Butler County Courthouse and the Dixon-Globe Opera/Robinson-Schwenn Building. Although it is primarily a business and commercial district, the Hamilton Downtown Historic District also includes properties associated with the civic, social and religious, entertainment and recreation history of Hamilton. The period of significance for the district spans 1855 to 1966, the time of the greatest development of the district.

The tallest and among the most grandly designed buildings are located on High Street, which is the primary artery in Hamilton's downtown. Other streets in the historic district are typically flanked by two to three story buildings, some of which share walls. Larger properties have associated parking areas, sometimes in adjacent lots. Commercial buildings with store-front retail directly accessible from the street and a separate access to businesses and offices located on the upper floors are characteristic throughout the district. Some contributing buildings have been rehabilitated, retaining their historic architectural integrity, and adaptively reused in the recent past; others, though currently not in use, preserve their historic character. Non-contributing properties in the district have been altered significantly or were constructed recently, after the period of significance for the historic district. The historically commercial district continues to function as one so as to maintain a continuity of use through to the present day. Buildings in the district exemplify a broad range of architectural styles, including Gothic Revival, Late-Victorian Italianate and Renaissance Revival, Beaux-Arts, Art Deco and Mid-Twentieth Century Modern.

Narrative Description

The Hamilton Downtown Historic District is located on the east side of the Great Miami River, and is bound approximately by South Front Street and South Third Street to the west and east, and High Street and Ludlow Street to the south and north. One block of North Third Street, from High Street to Market Street, is also included in the district. The narrative description below of the historic district is organized by the streets included in its boundary. The description of individual properties, contributing and non-contributing, follows a discussion of the physical appearance of each street. See **Maps 1 and 3** for the location of the historic district boundary and **Map 2** for photograph locations.

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High Street and Journal Square (Photographs 1-6)

Running east to west through the district, High Street is the primary artery in Hamilton's downtown. With a width of 120 feet, four lanes for traffic and additional parking lanes, High Street is the widest in the district, and includes some of the most notable contributing properties in the district. Journal Square is a block deep pedestrian access street south off High Street between its intersections with South Second and South Third streets. As all buildings with the Journal Square address also face High Street, the two streets are considered together here.

Buildings that line High Street include the First National Bank and Trust Company buildings, the Second National Bank, the National Register listed Dixon-Globe Opera/Robinson-Schwenn building, and the National Register listed Butler County Courthouse. In close proximity to the district are the National Register listed High Street Commercial District, comprising of three buildings, and the notable former Municipal Building (now, Mueller Building), and the Anthony Wayne Hotel.

Since the 1990s, buildings on High Street, including the Robinson-Schwenn building (in the district) and those in the High Street Commercial Historic District have undergone rehabilitation, to be adaptively used for commercial, retail, and rental housing. The rehabilitation of these buildings has been carried out with careful consideration of their historic architectural elements so that their integrity is retained. The streetscape has also undergone improvements, with newer paving, street lights, landscaping and the installation of sculptures, particularly in the vicinity of Journal Square during the early 2000s. Journal Square was a short street during the period of significance, and is now a landscaped pedestrian connection between High and Court streets.

On High Street, the historic district extends approximately three blocks from South Third Street to the east to South Front Street to the west along its south face. Along its north face, the district extends approximately one block from its intersection with North Third Street to its intersection with Martin Luther King Avenue to the west. There are thirteen contributing resources in this section of the historic district, including two that have been previously listed. There are three non-contributing resources located on High Street. These resources are described below.

Contributing Properties

C1. Butler County Courthouse, 135 High Street (1 Previously Listed Building)

Historic and Current Use: Civic/County Courthouse

Date of Construction/Alteration: 1887-1889 (Original Construction), 1912 (Alteration)

Architect: D. W. Gibbs (Original Building), Frederick Mueller (1912 Alteration)

The Butler County Courthouse is set in the block between High and Court Streets to the north and south and South Second and Front Streets to the east and west. Centrally placed within the block and surrounded by landscaped lawns and approaches, the Beaux Arts/Second Empire style building is symmetrical along both its axes, with monumental stairways set centrally on all four of its faces. The shape of the four story building, including the raised basement, is cruciform on a square base, its monumental scale enhanced by the central dome which crowns it. The building is

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constructed on a raised sandstone foundation, with rectangular windows in each of the two side bays flanking the entrance pavilions on each of the facades. Monumental flights of steps lead to the main story, a covered pavilion with Corinthian columns bringing focus to the arched entrance doorways on each face. Corner paired windows at the first and second story levels are rectangular and topped with arched lights. Classical pediments over the pavilions with sculptural stylized lanterns at their ends complete the composition of the central bay for each facade. The building is topped with a mansard roof with multiple ridges; projecting dormers with classical pediments and ocular windows are set in the corner bays at the roof level. A cylindrical drum rising above the mansard roof supports the dome above, bringing emphasis to the centralized plan of the building. The hallway inside the building comprises a grand atrium and open stairwell with an imposing sky-lit rotunda at the center – all historically significant features. Courtrooms and administrative offices flank the hallways encircling the central stairwell.

The Butler County Courthouse was designed by the Toledo, Ohio architectural firm of D. W. Gibbs and Company and constructed between 1885 and 1889. The building was altered in 1912, when the central dome, that currently crowns the building designed by local architect Frederick Mueller, replaced the original clock tower. The exterior staircases of the building were repaired in 2015. The Butler County Courthouse, which retains its integrity, was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981 (**Photographs 7 and 8**).

C2. Rentschler Building, 6 South Second Street at the High Street intersection (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail and Office

Current Use: Commerce/ Office

Date of Construction: 1905-1906

Architects: Peters, Burns and Pretzinger and George Barkman

Located at the intersection of High and South Second Streets, the eight story Rentschler Building was the tallest building in Hamilton until the construction of the County Building during the 1980s. With a footprint of 100 feet by 87 feet, the Rentschler Building is the preeminent Second Renaissance Revival Building in Hamilton. The street facades of the building, five bays wide along Second Street and four bays wide along High Street, where the main entrance is located, are constructed of stone, brick and glass. The first three stories of the building along these facades are constructed entirely of stone with glass windows extending the lengths of the bays. The street level store-front windows together with the second story above are treated as a single compositional element; the stone piers topped with the projecting cornice above form a base from which the upper stories of the building extend upward. The extensive use of stone quoins to define bays is carried up from this base to the third story level.

The upper stories are of multiple single and paired rectangular windows set within Flemish bond construction brick walls. Stone-finished surrounds and quoins mark the bays and the corners of the building. This facade treatment continues through to the upper story, which is once again treated with stone, and extensively decorated comprising fret work, egg and dart medallions forming the protruding, bracketed entablature, which is topped with a decorative copper parapet that hides the flat roof behind. The interior lobby is finished with marble and the seventh story of

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the building has a cornice with gargoyles, wreaths, and medallions. The rear, south and the east elevations are treated in a utilitarian manner with regular, rectangular window openings spanning the undifferentiated bays. A brick furnace stack extending the height of the building at its southeast corner is visible from the associated parking lot to its rear. Alterations to the building include newer aluminum frame windows at the street level, and newer furnishings and fixtures inside, to accommodate new businesses other than retail (**Photographs 1, 2, 9, and 10**). The building preserves its Renaissance Revival stylistic elements and its historic appearance and character (**Figures 11-13**). The Rentschler Building retains good integrity.

C3. Second National Bank/US Bank Building, 219 High Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Second National Bank

Current Use: Commerce/US Bank

Date of Construction: 1931; ca. 1955-1960 (Alteration)

Architects: Weary and Alford (Chicago), with local architect George Barkman

This four story Art Deco style bank building, of reinforced concrete construction with stone and brick walls, is located on High Street at the southwest corner of Journal Square. The building stands on a foundation clad with black granite stone. Rectangular in its footprint, the 88 feet wide and 100 feet deep building has a front façade and side elevations that are each seven bays wide. The High Street façade is comprised of two distinct sections. The three bay wide east section of the High Street facade is symmetrically composed, having a grand central bay with recessed glazed openings set within a three story arched entrance portico. Within the archway is a decorative metal screen with geometric and floral patterns, above which are a stylized eagle and an octagonal clock. Large, metallic stepped octagonal lanterns flank either side of the doorway. The bays on either side are massive, and follow a stepped profile typical of the Art Deco style. Recessed rectangular aluminum frame windows - one for each story - are set within bands of decorative stonework also with floral and geometric motifs. The roof of the building is hidden behind a stepped parapet rising over the entrance bay. A large metallic sculpture of an eagle, over one story in height, soars up from the roof. Bands of patterned stonework surround the prominently displayed name, "Second National Bank" above the entrance.

The west portion of the High Street facade has newer three story high aluminum glazing topped with a rectangular window at the fourth story level—a mid-twentieth century alteration, from the late-1950s-early 1960s, after the completion of the modernist Dollar Building (C5 below) with which it shares its architectural style, materials and character. Decorative stonework with geometric and floral patterns, however, extend to this portion of the facade from the eastern side. A second entrance to the building is set within the glass curtain wall on the west side of the facade. The east elevation, which looks toward Journal Square, shows continuity with the front facade in its decorative motifs, although executed in a less elaborate manner. The rear elevation of the building is utilitarian and of brick construction, while the west elevation abuts the neighboring Rentschler Building.

The Second National Bank Building, which currently houses the US Bank, is the most notable example of the Art Deco style in the district, exemplifying characteristic elements, including the stylized floral and animal ornamentation, geometric decoration, stepped patterns and

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configuration and use of aluminum casement windows and doors. The Art Deco motifs continue in the interior hallway of building, which has been modernized with newer dropped ceilings. The mid-twentieth century glass curtain wall on the west side of the front façade, the granite cladding over the foundation, and walled in windows on the rear elevation are other alterations to the building, which otherwise retains its significant Art Deco elements. Upon consideration of the alterations to the building, the Second National Bank building retains its integrity as an important Art Deco style building whose architectural significance extends, with its mid-twentieth century modernist alterations, to the late 1950s-early 1960s (**Photographs 1, 6, 11-13; Figure 16**).

C4. Dixon-Globe Opera/Robinson-Schwenn Building, 10 Journal Square (1 Previously Listed Building)

Historic Uses: Entertainment and Recreation/Opera Hall; Commerce/ Department Store and Offices

Current Use: Commerce: Retail and Office Space, Law Library

Date of Construction: 1866 (Original); 1907, 1952-1954, 2000 (Alterations)

Architect: Original Building – Unknown; Alterations – Frederick Mueller 1907); Hair Hetterich and Siegel (1952-1954), and Steed Hammond Paul (2000)

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, the Dixon-Globe Opera/Robinson-Schwenn Building is located at the southeast corner of High Street and Journal Square. This is a four and a half story brick building of the Italianate style with elements of the Romanesque and Renaissance Revival styles. The first story of the building features a modern, wood-frame glass panel store-front that extends across the High Street facade and partly wraps around to the west, Journal Square facade, with a square engaged pilaster marking the corner. The front facade is five bays wide, and exhibits a bilateral symmetry. The bays are distinguished by engaged, brick columns that extend from the cornice above the first story store-front to the entablature under the pediment that crowns the building. Arched windows with stone lintels (corner bays), and brick (central bays) are set in the upper level, above the store-front. A brick belt course with decorative modillion insets marks the transition between the second and the third stories. Corner bays at the third story level have arched windows similar to those on the story below. Providing a focal point to this facade is the rose window in the third story central bay, flanked by bays with ocular windows. A full pediment with a bracketed and raked cornice and an arcaded tympanum punctuated with vents crowns the third story. A raised brick parapet rises at the roof level and contains the construction date, 1866.

The west face comprises of an original six bay wide brick elevation with an additional seventh bay added that was later, likely towards the end of the nineteenth century. The first story of this elevation comprises of the shop-front windows wrapping around from High Street. There are three entrances on this elevation - a rectangular wood-frame door in the fourth bay from High Street and a rounded arch opening in the sixth bay, as well as a smaller service doorway in the added seventh bay. A stone lintel separates the first from the second story. The second story has paired double-hung arched windows with brick lintels in each bay. A stone modillion course, similar to the High Street façade, separates the second and third stories. The third story of the original building has large rectangular windows in the first, second and sixth bays from High

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Street and large arched windows in the remaining two bays. A full raked cornice with brackets extends its length. The addition, on the other hand, has smaller paired arch and rectangular window openings.

Alterations to the building include newer window frames, trims and finishes, carried out in a manner sympathetic to the style and character of the building. The original architect of the building, which was the city's first Opera Hall, is unknown. In 1907 the building was repurposed as the Robinson-Schwenn Department Store – the city's first such retail enterprise. Frederick Mueller of Hamilton was the architect for the project. Alterations to the building in 1952-1954, including the addition of a modern metal cladding, was designed by the firm of Hair Hetterich and Siegel that had evolved from Mueller's practice, with A. Benzing and Sons as the contractor. Steed Hammond Paul, the contemporary architectural firm that grew from Mueller's practice, was responsible for the restoration of the original façade and the rehabilitation of the building in about 2000 (**Photographs 5, 6, 14 and 15; Figures 9 and 11**). The restored building, individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, retains good integrity.

C5 and N8. Dollar Building/Fifth Third Bank, 2 South Third Street (C5) and 14 South Third Street (N8), at High Street intersection (1 Contributing Building, 1 Non-contributing Building)
Historic Use: Commerce/Bank, Office (2 South Third Street), Parking and Office (14 South Third Street)

Current Use: Under rehabilitation for commercial use

Date of Construction: 1958 (2 South Third Street); 1977 (14 South Third Street)

Architects: Winkler, Ranck and Beeghly; Builder/Contractor: A. Benzing and Sons

Located at the southeast intersection of High Street, the Dollar Building, 2 South Third Street, is the most significant example of mid-twentieth century Modern architecture in the district. The rectangular building has a footprint of 60 feet by 66 feet. The building is four stories tall with a taller first floor that accommodates a mezzanine level. The first story is marked by glazing set in fixed aluminum frame, set upon a black granite base. Entrances are located in the central bay of the five bay High Street façade and on south side of the South Third Street façade. The facades along both High and South Third streets are five bays wide and comprised of curtain wall with an aluminum frames, alternate rows of green granite stone cladding, and glazed panels of ribbon casement windows. The southern-most bay of the South Third Street façade is clad entirely with granite.

Windows are typically two panel casement types at the mezzanine level, and ribbon windows at the upper levels. The building has a flat roof as is typical of its architectural type. The modernistic building displays elements of the Meisian style, specifically, in its massing, curtain wall with aluminum framing that expresses its structural elements, and its plain facades with an extensive use of glass. The first floor of the concrete construction openly planned building is taller than the upper floors, with entrances located both along High Street (main) and South Third Street (secondary). The building was constructed in 1958 for the Dollar Federal Savings and Loan Association of Hamilton, by local architects Winkler, Ranck and Beeghly. The first and mezzanine floors were occupied by the Dollar Federal Savings and Loan Association, while the upper floors were designed to house offices, including those of the architect. While the

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building has been updated inside to house later tenants, its exterior has not been significantly altered since its construction (**Photographs 4, 16 and 17; Figure 19**). The building, in its current condition, retains good integrity as an example of mid-twentieth century modern architecture.

The rear (south) elevation of the building abuts a multi-story parking garage at 14 South Third Street. Associated with, and connected to the Fifth Third Bank building to its north, 14 South Third Street is a four story concrete construction building with brick exterior walls and recessed ribbon windows that extend the lengths of its floors. The first floor of the building is used as a parking garage. Constructed in 1977 after the period of significance for the district, the building does not contribute to the district (**Photograph 44**).

C6. David's Shoe Store/High Street Café, 250 High Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commercial/Retail

Current Use: Commercial/Retail

Date of Construction: 1954

Architect/Builder: Unknown

This is a two story commercial building of concrete construction. The first story of the building is comprised of a street front glazed entrance covered with a wooden canopy. Aluminum casement ribbon windows stretch across the second story of the front façade. The building, which has a footprint of 28 feet by 88 feet, shares its side walls with neighboring buildings. It is covered with a flat roof. Retaining its original shape and form, alterations to the flat roofed building include newer store-front windows and canopy at the street level, that are similar in character to other storefront windows and canopies in the district constructed during the 1960s. The building is a modest mid-twentieth century modernistic building, similar in its exterior elements to the contemporary Sears Department Store building and the ca. 1950s addition to the Cincinnati and Suburban Building (see below). In spite of the alterations, the building retains its shape, finishes and other characteristic mid-twentieth century modernist elements, and thus retains its integrity. (**Photograph 18**).

C7. Dunkel and Fye Grocery/Dreyfus Brothers/Sara's House Gift and Décor Shop, 254 High Street and 7 North Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail and Office

Current Use: Commerce/Retail and Office

Date of Construction: ca. 1875 (Original); late-1960s - early-1970s (Alterations) 2013-2014 (Rehabilitation)

Architect/Builder: Unknown

The three story retail/commercial brick construction building is located at the northwest intersection of High and North Third Streets. The Italianate style building is three bays wide along High Street and five bays wide along North Third Street. The first story of the recently restored building comprises of wood-framed store-front windows with an entrance at the corner of the two streets recessed from the planes of the facades. Along High Street, the second story comprises of segmental wood-framed rectangular windows at the corner bays and rectangular window topped with a triangular pediment in the central bays. Segmental arch windows mark the

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side bays of the third story, High Street facade. An arched window topped with a rounded pediment is located in the central bay at this story level. Side entrances along the North Third Street façade provide access to upper stories of this building. Windows on this side facade are double hung, topped with segmental arches with keystones. The central bay has paired arch windows. The bays are demarcated with engaged brick posts that rise to the full height of the building, meeting a raked architrave, frieze and an extended cornice with brackets at the roof level – elements typical of the Italianate style. The building has a flat roof with three brick chimney stacks that are only partially visible from the street.

When compared with a photograph taken during the Great Flood of 1913 it can be seen that the building, restored in 2013-2014, retains many of its character defining elements, even as some elements have been replaced with new materials (**Figure 10**). Most of the segmental arch surrounds over the windows are original, repaired and repainted. The triangular pediment surround in the central bay of the first story window, while stylistically compatible, is a modern replacement similar in configuration to the original triangular pediment. The extended cornice and the decorative brackets are original. A raised parapet over the cornice, as seen in historic photographs, was removed later, and has not been replaced. Window panels at the upper story are new, but in character with the one over one double hung types depicted in the historical photograph. The exterior, exposed brickwork has been carefully repaired and finished with new paint. Historical photographs show the first story comprised of a glass store-front with a street entrance. During the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the first floor of the building was used as a grocery store, with offices located in the upper floors. Prior to its restoration, the first story of the building was clad with wood clapboard, hiding its historic facade; the first floor was used as a Bail Bonds Office, and was finished with non-compatible modern store-front windows. The restoration comprised of the removal of the cladding and replacement with a modern glass store-front with a corner entrance. While the modern store-front can be distinguished from the historical elements of the building, it nonetheless is designed to be in character with the building's style. The first floor of the building, historically housing retail businesses, is compatibly used as a gift and decor shop.

The North Third Street façade comprises of walls that have been repaired and repointed. A window at the second story level, near the High Street intersection was walled in, likely during the mid-twentieth century, and remains filled in after the restoration. Other window surrounds and treatments appear to be original; the two over two window panes appear to be from the period of significance. Decorative brickwork and corbelling throughout the building is an original, character defining element. On balance, and considering the original appearance of the building, former Dunkel and Fye Grocery Store retains fair integrity and is a contributing element to the district. (**Photograph 19**).

C8-C9; N3. First National Bank and Trust Company (C8), People's Building and Loan Company/First Financial Bank (C9), and N3, 300 High Street (2 contributing Buildings, 1 Non-contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Bank and Offices

Current Use: Commerce/Bank and Offices

Dates of Construction: 1910, 1930, 1977

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Architects: George Barkman (1910 Building), Childs and Smith (1930 Building)

This property comprises of three buildings, constructed in 1910, 1930, and 1977, that share walls. The two-story, centrally placed building was the first of the three to be constructed and is a contributing building. This Renaissance Revival style building has a stone façade and features a prominent central rounded arch entry portal above which are rounded arch ribbon windows set within an arcade supported on delicate Corinthian columns. A second smaller entrance is located to the west of the large portal, and a rectangular window opening to its east. A projecting cornice with brackets sits under a raised parapet. The building was constructed for a separate institution, the People's Building and Loan Company before it was purchased by the First National Bank. This building was designed by the locally significant architect George Barkman, and was constructed by the Vaughn Building Company in 1910. Later modifications to the building include new glazing and the retro-fitting of an ATM machine within the entryway portal, likely carried out during the 1970s and 1980s. The building, though subject to some alteration, has kept its character-defining Renaissance Revival style alterations, and retained its historic integrity.

Constructed for the First National Bank and Trust Company in 1930, is the contributing eight story Neo-classical style building at the corner of High and North Third Streets. The building has a footprint of about 94 feet by 94 feet, and contains five bays on each face. The primary construction material of the building is Bedford Limestone, with metallic spandrels between windows at the upper story levels. The first story of the building consist of newer shop-front windows set within black granite clad walls. Set centrally along the High Street façade is an entrance portico extending up to the second story. Flanking Corinthian columns mark the recessed entrance to the building from the recessed glass door. The name of the bank etched on the exterior wall and a large modillion crown the entrance portico. The second story is double height, with vertical ribbon windows set within stone faced exterior walls. The bays at the upper story levels are marked by fluted, engaged columns that terminate at the projecting entablature near the roof. Rectangular aluminum casement windows - two for each bay – are set within the bays, surrounded by copper or lead panel cladding embossed with classical floral patterns. The flat roofed building is topped with a parapet lined with a volute and flower decorative band. Exterior modifications include new windows at the first story level, as well remodeling of the interior bank spaces at the first floor level of the building. Office spaces at the upper floor levels have been modernized and modified to suit the needs of later tenants. The Neo-classical style bank building has retained its historic appearance and integrity.

The non-contributing concrete building with brick veneer and glass curtain wall finish adjoins the two- story former People's Loan and Building Company building to its east. The first floor of the four-five story building consists of a central drive-through for vehicles with an entrance door to its west. The recessed central bay is filled with a glass curtain that rises approximately to the fourth story of the building. The upper floors of this building house banking facilities and other offices. The building was constructed in 1977, after the period of significance and does not contribute to the significance of the district. **(Photographs 3, 20-22, 25; Figure 17).**

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C10. George Best and Sons, Stove Dealer and Tin Shop/Ohio Lunch Room, 332 High Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail and Associated Workshop

Current Use: Commerce/Restaurant and Office

Date of Construction: ca. 1915

Architect: Unknown

This three story brick building is on the north side of High Street is attached to and just east of the First National Bank buildings. The first story of the building comprises shop-front windows. A shallow stone canopy tops the first story shop-front. Recessed courses of brickwork, set within a frame of rowlock brickwork marks the wall between the first and second story. Ribbon windows stretch across the larger central bays on the upper two stories of the three bay building. A projecting soldier course of bricks with stone insets marks the transition to the stepped, pedimented stone parapet above. The windowless side elevation of the building is clad with random rubble stone (lava rock) masonry, a mid-twentieth century alteration following the removal of buildings to the east with which it once shared walls. Other modifications include a new metal canopy and altered store-front windows with aluminum framing. The rear of the building is brick, with arched double hung windows on all stories and a metallic exterior staircase connecting the second and third stories. This commercial/retail building retains its original shape, form, and much of its exterior materials and its historic integrity. It is a typical small mixed use building, with store-front windows and street access at the first floor level and office/commercial space above, and is thus a contributing resource to the district (**Photograph 23**).

C11. Butler County Automobile Club/Max Stacey Florist Shop, 350 High Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Automobile Service

Current Use: Commerce/Retail

Date of Construction: 1934

Architect: Unknown

This modest commercial building is located at the northwest intersection of High Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard. It originally housed the Butler County Automobile Club and Service Station and the County Bureau of Motor Vehicles. Currently, it is occupied by a retail florist shop and office space at the second floor level (**Photograph 24**). The modernistic concrete building is rectangular in plan and two stories in height, with a single bay wide facade and a seven bay wide side elevation. The side bays are demarcated with fluted, stone clad engaged columns. The west elevation has triple metal casement windows on both stories, while the east elevation is windowless and stone clad. The first story of the facade comprises shop front windows and a glass entrance door recessed at an angle from the face of the building. The upper story is marked by ribbon casement windows extending the length of each bay. A flat roof is set behind a raised parapet topped with metal coping. Constructed in 1934, according to the county auditor records, this simple commercial building has stripped down classical elements, as in the fluted columns. Alterations include newer window frames and a replacement shop front along the first story facade. With its structural and character defining elements largely intact, the

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building retains its integrity and contributes to the district as a modest retail/office establishment with modernistic architectural elements.

C12. Statue of Hebe, 358 High Street (1 Contributing Object)

Original Use: Civic, Public Art/ public water fountain

Current Use: Public Art/Statue

Date of Construction: ca. 1885

Artist/Sculptor: Unknown

Located near the intersection of North Third and High streets, this stone sculptural fountain depicts the Greek goddess Hebe, the cupbearer of Olympian gods, serving them nectar and ambrosia. The water fountain was likely constructed ca. 1885-1890, after the city built a public water supply system in 1884 (**Photograph 26**). No longer functional, the fountain rests on an octagonal marble base. A fountain bowl for people and smaller lap cups near the base for horses and dogs are set on the stand marked by sculptural stylized fish at the vertices, on which the sculpture stands. This was the first public water fountain constructed in Hamilton during the late nineteenth century. The sculpture was lost following the construction of the First National Bank building, only to be recovered and returned to its original location on High Street in front of the bank in 1976. In 2012, the First Financial Bank demolished an older building at the intersection to create a small park there, and in 2013, the statue was placed there on a new base. Although no longer a functioning fountain, the object retains characteristics, including the symbolism of the depicted goddess Hebe and the fountain bowl and cups of its original function. The Statue of Hebe remains close to its original location in Hamilton and is an important object associated with the city's civic improvements and public welfare during the late nineteenth century. It retains its sculptural elements and its appearance points to its original use; the object retains its historic integrity and is the only remaining example of its type in the district.

C13-C14. Fitton and Brother, Dry Goods Store, Independent Order of Odd Fellows Meeting, Saloon, Retail stores, Hall/Mehas Music, 245 High Street (2 Contributing Buildings)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail, Social History/Fraternal Organization

Current Use: Mehas Music store

Date of Construction: c. 1870 (Construction), ca. 1960-1965 (Alterations).

This property is located at the intersection of South Third and High streets, at their southwest corner. The property, which is comprised of two buildings covered at the upper floor levels with a metal cladding during the mid-twentieth century, reads as a single edifice. The first floor comprises of glazed storefront windows and entrances to the store located on both the facades. Two windows punctuate the front façade at the second and third story west corner. Two staggered windows at the second and third story levels of the Third Street elevation are connected with an exterior metal staircase. An early twentieth century photograph shows the two buildings which shared a side wall (**Figure 9**). Contemporary aerial imagery shows the outlines of the two buildings. The original addresses for the Italianate style commercial buildings were 243 and 245 High Street. The building at 245 High Street stood at the corner of North Third and High Streets. As shown in the historic photograph, the building had a three bay front façade and a nine bay side façade, with each bay punctuated by an elongated arched window with a

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decorative crown molding prior to alterations. The windows at the third story level, which was a meeting hall, were taller. The first story front face is a glass store-front with a central doorway. Extended eaves with brackets top the flat-roofed building. The building was originally home to the Fitton and Brother Store. The third floor was used by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows for meetings during the late nineteenth century, while retail and commerce remained the main use of the rest of the property. The attached building at 243 High Street was also three stories in height and had a three bay front façade. Its first floor was used as a saloon during the late nineteenth century, and housed a variety of modest retail businesses during the twentieth century. The building was constructed in a style similar to that of 245 High Street, with a brick façade, arched elongated windows, and a prominent cornice with decorative brackets extending over the flat roof.

Mehas Music Store has occupied the buildings since about 1976. In ca. 1960, the street facades were covered with corrugated steel cladding in order give the building a contemporary appearance. The materials and finishes used to “modernize” the old building were virtually identical in character as those used on the Home Furnishings Building for its renovation in 1960. They exemplified the historically significant trend of covering older buildings, cost effectively, with new materials to give them a modern appearance and make them economically viable, instead of removing and replacing them with new edifices. The buildings, with the mid-twentieth century cladding, are in a fair condition, and contribute to the district, retaining in their appearance the part they played in the commercial development of the district and for its mid-twentieth century architectural modernization it exemplifies (**Photographs 27 and 43**). The Mehas Music store retains its integrity for its association with mid-twentieth century architectural and commercial trends.

Non-Contributing Properties

High Street

N1-N2. Siedensticker’s Silver-plated Ware Store/Woolworth’s Department Store/Ryan’s Tavern, 235-241 High Street (2 Non-contributing Buildings)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Commerce/Restaurant

Date of Construction: ca. 1883-1885; late 1960s-early 1970s, 2006-2007 (Alterations)

Architect: Unknown

This property comprises of two adjoining building (235 and 241 High Street), both three stories in height. These buildings were constructed in ca. 1883-1885 (**Photograph 27**). The building to the east is of brick construction, with store-front windows at the first story level and double hung windows stretching six bays above. The central bays of the third story are windowless and carry the sign of the restaurant "Ryan's Tavern" which occupies the buildings. A projecting cornice with brackets completes the façade. The building to the west is two bays wide, of brick construction, covered with newer siding (date the siding). Windows are double hung with planter boxes at the sills. The interior of the two buildings comprises a bar and restaurant on the first floor, with the dividing walls between the two buildings opened up to create a larger space, effectively of one building. The restaurant extends to the second floor of the building.

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As depicted in an early twentieth century photograph, the property at 241 High Street (formerly 237-241 High Street) was a three story building, six bays wide, with a set-back making room for a glass roof covered terrace over the central bays of the first story. The side bays were three stories tall and topped with pediments. The building at 235 High Street was also a three story brick building, with two bays of windows over the shop front first story, and a flat roof with extended cornice and brackets at the parapet level (**Figure 9**). During the late 1960s-early 1970s, the façade of the 235 High Street Building was clad with a steel sheet curtain wall, windows replaced and iron planter boxes placed at their sills. The building at 241 High Street underwent significant changes during a 2006-2007 rehabilitation, including the replacement of much of the exterior wall. This property has undergone major alterations, which become apparent when it is seen in the light of the historical photograph, to its historical appearance. The property does not retain its integrity and thus does not contribute to the district.

N3. 300 High Street (Newer Building associated with First Financial Bank –see above/#C8-C9); **Photograph 20)**

North Third Street

The historic district extends one block along the 66 feet wide, two lane, North Third Street, between its intersections with High Street to the south to Market Street to the north. The east side of the block comprises the First National Bank building at the High Street intersection and ancillary buildings located to the rear. On the west side of the street are five small commercial buildings constructed during the late-nineteenth, early twentieth, and mid-twentieth centuries. Ranging from single to three stories in height, these buildings typically have shop front windows and entrances at the first floor level and office/commercial spaces at the upper floor levels. There are five contributing resources in this section of the district. All but one of the modest commercial buildings that share their side walls were constructed between 1900 and 1927, and comprise of storefronts that were modified during the mid-twentieth century to modernize and make the properties commercially viable. Together, they represent a coherent group of buildings that provide evidence of an important trends of modernization during the mid-twentieth century that included modest commercial buildings. Of the five contributing resources, the building located at the intersection of High and North Third Street (addresses 7 North Third Street and 246 High Street) has been described earlier. The remaining contributing resources are described below (**Photograph 28**).

Contributing Properties

C15. Weubbold Building, 9 North Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Retail/Commerce

Current Use: Not in use

Date of Construction: 1927

Architect: Unknown

The three-story tall Wuebbold Building is located on the west side of North Third Street near its intersection with High Street. The building was constructed for the Weubbold & Company Blank

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Book manufacturing and retail business, and was used also as their retail establishment. This modest building, which harbors elements of the Neo-classical Revival style, is finished in stone. The first floor of the building comprises a store-front window and an entrance at the north corner. Ribbon windows are framed by classical circular posts with Corinthian style capitals. The name, "Weubbold," is etched on the spandrel between the second and third stories. A decorative band of stonework marks the lintel level of the third story ribbon windows, while stylized floral carvings are patterned on the parapet of the flat roofed building. Alterations to the building include a new flat canopy tethered with tie-rods over the store-front, replacement entrance doorway and store-front windows, as well as newer aluminum frame windows at the upper story level, exemplifying a significant mid-twentieth century trend to modernize buildings to ensure their commercial viability. The building retains its integrity as judged from its character-defining materials and stylistic elements, both original and mid-century modern, and its association with its continued commercial viability during the twentieth century. It is a contributing resource to the district (**Photograph 29**).

C16. Original Weubbold and Company Building, 11-13 North Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce - Retail/Manufacturing

Current Use: Commerce/Law Office

Date of Construction: ca. 1900; ca. 1960s (Alterations).

This five bay wide, three-story commercial/retail brick building is on the west side of North Third Street between High and Market streets. The building was constructed ca. 1900 and housed the Weubbold & Company business before its expansion to the neighboring building at 9 North Third Street. Like its neighboring buildings, the first story of this building comprises modified shop-front windows with glazing and the entrance set within tile-clad walls. A full length, flat cantilevered canopy with tie-rods projects over the shop-front. The second and third stories are extensively glazed, with windows filling the widths of the bays. Windows at the second story level are of fixed glazing type, while double hung windows recessed from the brickwork above are set at the third story level of the facade. Near the roof level is a corbelled cornice projecting out at the parapet level. While the building has been altered during the 1960s with newer store-front windows, window frames, exterior paint, and canopy, it retains the original shape and façade composition. The alterations typify a mid-twentieth century trend to modernize even modest buildings to ensure their commercial viability (**Photograph 30**). The contributing building retains its integrity as judged from its character-defining materials and stylistic elements, both original and mid-century modern, associated with its commercial viability through the twentieth century.

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C17. Schwarz Jewelry Store/Restaurant, 19-21 North Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Commerce/Restaurant

Date of Construction: 1966

Architect: Unknown

This is a one story, mid-twentieth century modern retail building located at the intersection of North Third and Market streets. The building has a recessed store-front with rectangular aluminum framed display windows boxed within concrete surrounds and glazed aluminum doors marking the entrances to the retail establishments. A wooden, cantilevered canopy supported by tie-rods attached to the wall extends across the facade. Currently used as a pizza restaurant, this building was constructed as a retail establishment housing the Schwarz jewelry business - similar to others in its use - in 1966. It retains the functional appearance - one that emphasizes a simple geometry of recessed and projecting surfaces set in a uniformly clad wall, and, retaining its integrity, is a contributing building as an example of a typical retail establishment of the mid-twentieth century modern era (**Photograph 31**).

C18. Zettler Law Office, 15-17 North Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail; Residential/Dwelling (Second Floor)

Current Use: Zettler Law Office

Date of Construction: ca. 1920; ca. 1955-1957 (Alterations)

Architect: Unknown

This is a two story retail/commercial building located on the west side of North Third Street between High and Market streets. Constructed of brick, the building is two and a half stories in height and covered with a gable roof. The building has a side gable facade with a store-front first story with two entrances (at 15 and 17 North Third Street) and a four bay wide second story with fixed wood-frame windows. A shed type dormer, with its window now sealed in, projects toward the street from the face of the roof. Alterations to the building include new tile faced wall in place of an older store, replacement entrance doors, canopy, and glazing, new window frames at the second story level, newer signage, and replacement roof shingles. The facade of the building has been painted. As depicted in the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1927, the building was constructed in about 1920, with the first floor used by retail stores and the second floor as a dwelling. The building was modernized during the mid-1950s, and alterations made included the construction of the recessed storefront and new finishes to the exterior. At the time, the second floor was converted to an office space (**Photograph 32**). Alterations to the building were made during the period of significance were likely to ensure the economic viability of the commercial property. The property thus retains its integrity, and is contributing as a commercial building that continued to serve its purpose through the period of significance.

South Second Street

The district includes two blocks of South Second Street, extending from its intersection with High Street to its intersection with Ludlow Street. The street is characterized by larger commercial, civic, and public utility buildings between the High and Court street intersection. It

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is characterized by smaller commercial/retail buildings interspersed with associated paved parking areas between Court and Ludlow street intersection. South Second Street is 100 feet wide between High and Court streets, and 66 feet wide between Court and Ludlow streets. Its intersection with High Street is flanked by the Butler County Courthouse – the only building on that side of the street – to the west; only two buildings – the Rentschler Building at the High Street intersection and the former Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company store stand on the east side of the road. Access to a parking lot associated with the Rentschler Building is located in the space between these two buildings. The extra width of the street here allows for additional parking adjacent to the courthouse. With the exception of the Home Furnishings building at the southwest intersection of Court and South Second streets, the district boundary in this block is limited to the east side of the street and does not include the parking lot on its west side.

Contributing buildings between Court and Ludlow streets on its east side include the four story early twentieth century Miami Manor Apartments (former Hamilton Hotel), the two story mid-twentieth century modern Primary Health Solutions building (former Sears Department Store), and the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building at the intersection of South Second and Ludlow streets. Buildings on this face of the street represent a variety of styles and types representative of the district, ranging from Renaissance Revival and Art Deco to mid-twentieth century Modern. With the exception of the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building, constructed in multiple phases, these buildings were typically designed to house retail establishments on the first floor, with entryways and shop front display windows, and commercial or residential spaces on the upper floors. The Sears Department Store building, while having the characteristic display windows at the first floor level, was one originally designed specifically for retail even at the second floor level. Along South Second Street, there are six contributing resources and two non-contributing resources, as described below. Rentschler Building (C2), at the intersection of High and South Second streets, has been considered above with other buildings on or facing High Street (**Photographs 1, 8, 33 and 34**).

Contributing Properties

C19. Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company Men's Furnishing Store/Mayer's Inc. Ladies Wear Store, 24 South Second Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Not in use

Date of Construction: 1929

Architect: Rapp and Rapp

The two story Art Deco building of reinforced concrete is located at the northeast intersection of Court and Second streets. The entrance to the building is from a recessed doorway at the corner of the two streets. The building has a four bay wide facade along South Second Street and a two bay wide facade along Court Street. Extensive display windows between the structural columns, covered with newer canvas awning, mark the first story of the building. The second story is also extensively glazed with ribbon windows with vertical fluted metal stems applied between the bays to evenly divide the metal casement windows. The parapet of the flat roofed building is decorated with incised geometric patterns typical of the Art Deco style. Inside, the building is

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comprised of an open planned space. A contemporary mural has been painted on blank, north facing wall of the building. This building was associated with the Art Deco style Paramount Theatre, also designed by Rapp and Rapp, and shared a wall with that building. Since the Paramount Theatre was demolished in 1961, this building retains its integrity as one of the few remaining examples of Art Deco style in the district (**Photograph 35**).

C20. Eatmore Restaurant/Cohen & Schwarz Cigar Store, Democratic Party Local Headquarters, 110-116 South Second Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail, Civic/Political Party

Current Use: Not in Use

Date of Construction: 1929

Architect: Unknown

The two story commercial building, of reinforced concrete construction, is located on South Second Street between Court and Ludlow streets. The building was constructed in 1929. The first floor housed restaurants for several years, while the upper floor was used as office space, including for the Butler County Democratic Party. The first story of the building comprises of three retail spaces, each with an entrance doorway and a display window. The second story is ten bays wide with the bays separated by fluted, engaged columns. A casement window punctuates each bay at this level of the front facade. The windows are original, metal framed two-paneled with a fixed fanlight above. A shallow, projecting parapet with geometric motifs crowns the flat roofed building. Alterations to the building include replacement door panels and glass fronts of the display windows, as well as wood/metal canopies over the shop fronts at the first story level. Two arched double hung windows are visible on the second story of this side facade. Retaining its integrity, the building is among the characteristic small properties in the district with retail space at the first floor level and office spaces located on the upper floor (**Photograph 36, 38**).

C21. Hamilton Hotel/Miami Manor Apartments, 118-120 South Second Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Hotel

Current Use: Dwelling/Rental Apartments

Date of Construction: 1907

Architect: Frederick Mueller

Located on Second Street between Court and Ludlow Streets, this four story Second Renaissance Revival building was designed by Hamilton architect Frederick Mueller and constructed in 1907 as the Hamilton Hotel. The Hamilton Hotel remained open here until 1973. The building was later put to other commercial uses, including as office space and rental apartment. The building stands on a concrete foundation, and is of brick construction with stone brackets, sills, lintels, and quoins at the north and south corners of the front facade. The symmetrical front facade has five bays, with the entrance located in the central bay. The side facades are seventeen bays wide, also constructed of brick, but of a darker hue. The stone-finished first story projects out from the plane of the elevation. Two newer recessed store-front windows, designed sympathetically to the historic character of the building, flank the central entryway. The central area, comprising three bays, is set back from the plane of the facade at the upper story levels. The set-back is

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emphasized by stone quoins at the ends of the side bays. Taller windows in the central bay are located at a half-landing level, suggesting the central location of the staircase within the building. The side bays are marked by rectangular double hung windows with stone sills, lintels and decorative brackets. The central windows are one-over one double hung, with similar supports and decorative treatment as the ones characterizing the bays on either side. A stone entablature with stone modillion and swags under a protruding parapet at the roof line of the front façade protrudes near the roof level. The side facades are simple and unadorned, with simple arched double-hung windows marking each of the bays.

The Renaissance Revival elements of this building include the rectangular massing, stone wall treatments with classical motifs, the flat roof hidden behind the decorative parapet, and the extensive use of stone quoins on the front facade. Significant architectural elements and materials remain in good condition, and with the building returned to its original use as a dwelling (though as rental apartments rather than as hotel), the building retains good integrity. **(Photographs 34, 37, 38).**

C22. Sears Department Store/Primary Health Solutions Clinic and Offices, 210 South Second Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail – Department Store, Sears and Company Department Store

Current Use: Commerce/Health Care

Date of Construction: 1951; mid-1980s (Alterations), 2010 (Alterations).

Architect: Unknown

This two story reinforced concrete building is similar in its modernistic style to the adjacent South Second Street addition to the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell building to its south. The building was constructed to house the Sears Department Store in 1951, becoming the first in Hamilton to be constructed for the type of retail activity. It was used, since the 1980s to house offices, and currently, as the clinic and offices of Primary Health Solutions. The lower story of the building comprises extensive store-front windows surrounded by granite cladding and topped with canvas awning. An asymmetrically placed glazed doorway provides access to the building. With the exception of a strip of ribbon windows at the south end of the facade, the upper story of the building, on the other hand, is windowless, giving it a massive appearance juxtaposed with the lightness of the glazed lower story on which it stands. The side and rear elevations of the building are constructed out of brick and punctuated with irregularly placed rectangular windows and vents. A parking lot is located to the rear, west side of the building. The asymmetrical, unadorned concrete-faced front elevation, the extensive use of glass panels at the first story levels and juxtaposition of the massive-appearing second story on the glazed first story are all elements of the modernist style. Alterations to the building include new store-front type glazing at the first floor level, the canvas awning, and new signage for Primary Health Solutions, which currently occupies the building. The interior has been altered to house doctor's and clinic rooms and administrative spaces for the occupant. The building has kept its exterior character-defining materials and stylistic elements even as its use has changed, and thus retains its historic integrity **(Photograph 34, 39).**

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C23. Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Telephone Company, 222 South Second Street (1
Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Utility Company

Current Use: Commerce/Utility Company

Dates of Construction: 1920 (Original), 1927 and ca. 1950s (Additions)

Architect: Unknown

Located at the northeast intersection of South Second and Ludlow streets, the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell property comprises an original building on Ludlow Street with two additions to its shorter west facade along South Second and east facade along Ludlow Streets. The original building is two stories tall and of brick construction on a raised stone foundation. This building is six bays wide along Ludlow Street, with double hung windows recessed from the plane of the facade on each story marking the bays. Corresponding windows for each bay mark the raised water table of the stone foundation. A decorative stone cornice and brick parapet crown the building, hiding the flat roof behind from view. The corner bays are narrower than the central ones, and are emphasized by medallions at the cornice level and decorative brickwork on the pilasters on either side of the windows. Set back from the plane of the facade, the windows are marked by stone sills and projecting stone lintels. Late twentieth century alterations to the building include newer window panels, vents at the basement level, and a walled in window on the first story of the western most bay. The newer additions on either side of the building are of stone and concrete construction of a stripped down classicism with openings. The Ludlow Street addition is three stories in height and eight bays wide, with an entrance doorway marking the west bay that adjoins the original building. Windows mark each of bays of the simple, unadorned facade, which has a raised foundation with vents and a projecting cornice that match the original building. The two story tall South Second Street facade is eight bays wide, with large, modernistic ribbon windows at the first story level and triple hung windows at the upper story level. This addition was constructed abutting the entrance to the original building. The main entrance to this property is from a centrally located doorway along this facade. This addition is similar in style character and materials to the adjacent Sears Department Store building. The original Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building was constructed in 1920. The Ludlow Street addition was constructed in 1927, and the modernistic South Second Street addition in ca. 1950s. The original building and the additions showcase both, a successful business that expanded through the mid-twentieth century as well as the changing architectural trends through the period, exemplified in the stripped down Classical style of the early buildings and the modernist style of the last addition. The building and its addition have kept their historic appearance and character, and retain integrity as a contributing resource to the district (**Photographs 34, 40, 41**).

C24. Stengel's Furnishings/Reutti Building/Home Furnishings, southwest corner, South Second and Court Streets (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Not in Use

Date of Construction: ca. 1870; 1960 (Alteration)

Architect: Unknown; Architect for Alteration: Winkler, Ranck and Beeghly; Builder for Alteration: Vaughn Building Company

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Currently not in use, the three story building with a rectangular footprint was a used furniture store during the late twentieth century. A photograph of the building taken during the Great Flood shows it to be six bays wide along Court Street, with arched windows on each bay separated by paired engaged columns, with a full entablature complete with a bracketed projecting parapet above. The Second Street façade was a blank brick wall at the sides and a central bay with a pediment at the roof level. Shop front windows stretched the first story along South Second Street. The building was constructed in about 1870, and was home to the Stengel's Furnishing Store in the nineteenth century and Reutti Furniture Store during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Home Furnishings store operated in the building from 1937. In 1960, the Home Furnishings store underwent a significant modernization, with the firm of Winkler, Ranck and Beeghly, architect for the modernist Dollar Building (C5), as the designers. The exterior was finished with a corrugated steel cladding, while the interior was modified with gallery type displays with over 40 room settings (*Hamilton Journal and Daily News*, January 15, 1960). **(Photograph 42; Figure 20)**. With the modifications, the Home Furnishings building was at the forefront of the mid-twentieth century trend of covering older buildings, cost effectively, with new materials to give them a modern appearance and make them economically viable, instead of removing and replacing them with new edifices. The building is in a fair condition, and contributes to the district, both for the role it played in the commercial development of the district through the period of significance and for its mid-twentieth century trend of architectural modernization of existing buildings it exemplifies. It retains its integrity for its association with mid-twentieth century architectural and commercial trends.

Non-contributing Properties

N4. Banking Kiosk, 108 South Second Street (1 Non-contributing Building)

Current and Historic Use: Commerce/Bank Kiosk

Date of Construction: 1974

Architect: Unknown

This is a single story, single room enclosed kiosk of brick construction that is attached to the north façade of 110-116 South Second Street building, with no interior access to the latter building. The attached building has a glass window and a glass door that provide access to the banking ATM machine located within. Constructed in 1974, this non-descript building does not contribute to the historic district **(Photograph 38)**.

South Third Street

The historic district extends along South Third Street from its intersection with High Street to its intersection with Ludlow Street, and includes the intersections with Court and Maple streets. The 66 feet wide South Third Street is densely built up between High and Court streets. There are six contributing and six non-contributing resources in this section of the district, not including the contributing Dollar Building and the contributing Journal News Building (addition) that have been discussed earlier. Important buildings along South Third Street include the mid-twentieth century modern Fifth Third Bank (Dollar Building) at the High Street intersection, an addition to the Journal News Building at its intersection with Court Street, and smaller late-nineteenth

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century buildings such as the Dunlap Building on the east side of the street. Further up the street, between Court and Ludlow streets, South Third Street is less densely built up, with contributing resources sometimes set apart by associated parking and other vacant lots. Significant buildings in this section of South Third Street includes the Renaissance Revival Home and Building Association (now Chaco Credit Union) Building at the Court Street intersection and further down, the Federal Building (now Butler County Health Department), the commercial Joffe Furniture Building at the Ludlow Street intersection, and the former Palace Theatre building on the west side of South Third Street. The multi-storied Ringel's Furniture building, located at the northwest intersection of South Third and Ludlow streets, was undergoing a significant rehabilitation at the time of the survey. Buildings on the street represent a variety of architectural styles ranging from nineteenth century Italianate, to Renaissance Revival and Beaux Arts, through to mid-twentieth century modernism. They also represent a variety of uses, including commercial and retail, entertainment, and civic that characterize the district. The contributing and non-contributing buildings along South Third Street are described below (**Photographs 16, 43-46**).

Contributing Properties

C25. Dunlap Clothing Company, 18 South Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail, Dunlap Clothing Company

Current Use: Not in use

Date of Construction: ca. 1887

Architect: Unknown

Located on the east side of South Third Street between High and Court Streets, this single bay wide commercial building of brick construction shares walls with the neighboring new building at 14 South Third Street. The building was constructed in about 1887, and was used by retail druggists during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Later, it was home to Meyer Schaengold's tailoring business, a shoe store and repair business, and an insurance company. The building is an important commercial property constructed during the late-nineteenth century with mid-twentieth century alterations that helped ensure its commercial viability through the period of significance. The three story building features prominent centrally placed bay windows at the stories and a protruding cornice with decorative brackets at the roof level – elements of the Italianate style. The first story shop front has been modified with smaller casement windows replacing the original finish, likely during the mid-twentieth century. The storefront windows are topped with a cantilevered canopy supported with tie-rods, a typical mid-twentieth century modification carried out also in other buildings throughout the district to ensure their continued commercial viability. The bay window openings have been bricked in, an alteration that negatively impacts its historic appearance. However, the impact of the windows being bricked in is mitigated by the fact that the shape, form material and character of the protruding bays is intact, along with the cornice to which they are vertically connected are all retained. The bays are of iron construction and decorated with pointed arch motifs, significant elements of the of the Gothic Revival style. While there have been alterations to the building during the twentieth century, such as newer shop front windows and canopy at the first story, and the filling in of window openings, it retains integrity of design, material and workmanship, and of its association

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with the history of commerce through the period of significance. The property is thus a contributing resource to the district (**Photograph 44**).

C26. Home Loan and Building Association/Chaco Credit Union, 100 South Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Banking, Loan Association

Current Use: Commerce/Bank

Date of Construction: 1923; late-1970s- ca. 1980 (Addition)

Architect: Frederick Mueller

Builder: Vaughn Building Company

This Second Renaissance Revival building is located at the southeast corner intersection of South Third and Court Streets. The property comprises a two story building, five bays wide along each facade, and an equally proportioned brick addition to its rear, south side, also constructed of brick with a blank facade overlooking South Third Street and a nine bay brick facade facing a parking lot to the south. The building was constructed in 1923, based upon the design of architect Frederick Mueller, with the Vaughn Building Company as the builders. The addition to the building was likely constructed during the late 1970s to early 1980s, prior to the preparation of the Ohio Historic Inventory Form (#BUT-0754-09) for the property in 1984. In 2002, the Home Loan and Building Association sold the building to the Chaco Credit Union, the current occupant.

The two story main building is of reinforced concrete construction with brick walls facing the side bays of its facades and stone walls in the central bays. Stone quoins interface with the brickwork along the corners. The central bays are framed with engaged stone columns topped with a full entablature and a raised parapet with cartouches completing the composition. The main entrance to the building is located symmetrically in the central bay of the South Third Street facade. The building rests on a marble faced foundation, and has a raised concrete water table. The first story of the building is shallow in height, punctuated with square openings. The main, second story, on the other hand, extends through much of the height of the building, and is marked by tall multi-paneled windows. Constructed mainly of brick with stone quoins, cornice and foundation that match those of the old building, the addition is nonetheless distinctly more contemporary, with fixed glazing extending the height of the building along each of its bays. The 1923 building retains its Renaissance Revival characteristics, including the rectangular massing, masonry construction, low pitched roof, elongated rectangular windows, and the extensive use of stone quoins. The addition, clearly a later construction, was nonetheless built with careful consideration of the character with the original building, with matching materials, floor, and window and roof alignment. The significant original building thus retains its integrity (**Photographs 48, 49; Figure 15**).

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C27. Palace Theatre/Creative Center at the Palace, 215 South Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Entertainment/Theatre, Cinema Hall

Current Use: Entertainment/Theatre Company

Date of Construction: 1920; mid-1960s (Alteration); 2004 (Rehabilitation).

Architect: Frederick Mueller (with Fred S. Meyer, Managing Director of the Theatre)

This building, an example of Beaux Arts Classicism, is located on the west side of South Third Street between Maple and Ludlow Streets. The building was constructed in 1920 based upon the design of Frederick Mueller, who worked in close coordination with the managing director of the theatre, Fred S. Meyer. Greater Hamilton Civic Theatre (GHCT) acquired the building in 2004. Partnering with the Hamilton Community Foundation, the organization obtained donations and two grants from the Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission to restore the building. The building is currently known as The Creative Center at the Palace and is used as a home base for GHCT, holding a rehearsal hall, costume room, set room, and office space, a restoration sympathetic in use to its original function as a movie theatre

Constructed as a movie theatre, the building has a five bay stone finished front façade with side facades of brick. Recessed within the massive corner facades are three bays with entrance doorways at the first floor level topped with large arched windows set back from a classical arched colonnade, complete with a balustrade, Doric columns, and a full entablature with a bracketed cornice. The side bays have rectangular louvered openings framed within the terra cotta finish at the upper level, with glass front windows matching those of the entrances in the central bays. A decorative frieze and stepped parapet with volutes finishes the composition of the front façade. The side facades, by comparison are plain brick. Alterations to the building include new window frames and panels set within the original openings, new louvers over the windows in the side bays, and new glazed entrance doorways. Fortunately, original entablature and colonnade were left intact and in a fair condition during the mid-1960s modernization, and were brought back to surface as the building was uncovered during the 2004 restoration (**Photograph 50**). The restored building retains its design characteristics and its association with its original use in its appearance. It thus retains its integrity and is a contributing resource to the district.

C28. Trebel Building/Joffe Furniture Store, 216 South Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail, and Dwelling/Apartments and Hotel

Current Use: Unoccupied

Date of Construction: ca. 1890

Architect: Unknown

The three story building of brick construction with quarry cut stone cladding along the front façade is located on the east side of South Third Street between Maple and Ludlow streets. Constructed in about 1890, the building was home to various retail establishments, apartment dwellings and the Hotel Trebel through the mid-twentieth century. In about 1950, the Joffe Furniture Company established its store here and continued to operate until about 1986. The building is three bays wide along the street façade and six bays along the side facade. The front facade is symmetrically composed, with a central opening flanked by store-front windows on

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either side. Bay windows extend the height of the upper stories along the two side bays. The building is covered with steeply pitched gable roofs over each side bay, framed at the wall junction with decorative stone, the symmetry of the facade carried up to the roof level. The central bay of the front façade is comprised of paired windows at each of the upper story levels with stone lintels and rounded stone masonry framing the windows. The name of the building, "Trebel" is embellished under the roof of the central bay. The side-gable roof/wall junction along the side facade is elaborated with decorative brick corbelling. In contrast with the elaborate gable roof visible from the street, the side and rear sections of the building are covered with a roof that slopes gently towards the rear. This facade has vents at the first story level and double hung windows marking each of the bays at the two upper story levels. Alterations to the building include a remodeled glass shop front at the first story level and wood shuttering of window openings. The building retains its form, shape and design, in particular the elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, including the rough stone finish on the front facade, decorative treatment, and gable roof elaborations. The currently unoccupied building retains integrity and is a contributing resource to the historic district (**Photographs 51, 52**).

C29. Furniture Store, 220-224 South Third Street and 316 Ludlow Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Ongoing rehabilitation

Dates of Construction: 1899, 1950 (Addition)

Architect: Frederick Mueller

This is a three story brick building located at the intersection of South Third and Court streets. The main, South Third Street façade, is five bays wide, with shop front windows at the first story level and arched two over two double hung arched windows in each bay on each of the two upper stories. Built in ca. 1950, according to Butler County Auditor records, the associated 316 Ludlow Street is a single story, flat roofed warehouse building of brick construction, attached to the original building. The building was constructed in 1899, and was likely designed by the local architect Frederick Mueller. Through its history, it has been home to several retail furniture businesses, including the Harry Strauss Furniture Store during the 1920s and Joffe Furniture in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The Ludlow Street facade of this unadorned building comprises of six bays with small, square four panel windows and an entrance that is currently boarded up at the east end. The building shares a wall with the three story former Joffe Furniture store, and is associated with that business. The symmetrically composed building has a central entryway topped with a stepped parapet while a raised pediment conceals the flat roof covering the building. The Court Street facade of the building is seven bays wide, with small square vent-type windows and a side entrance at the first story level and rectangular six over six wood frame windows at the upper story level. Alterations to the building include newer shop-front windows and awning at the first story level. The façade at the upper story level remains largely unaltered with original or historic windows still in place. The simple addition to the rear is significant as evidence of the expanding business of the furniture company during the mid-twentieth century. This commercial building retains its integrity and is a contributing building to the district. (**Photograph 53**).

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C30. Federal Building/Butler County Board of Elections/ Butler County Board of Health, 301 South Third Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Civic/Federal Building, Post Office

Current Use: Civic/Butler County Board of Health

Date of Construction: 1909

Architect/Builder: Barnes Brothers, Marion, Indiana

Located at the intersection of South Third and Ludlow streets, this is a two story Beaux Arts style building built of stone finished exterior walls. The Federal Building was constructed in 1909, built by Barnes Brothers of Marion, Indiana, to house the United States Post Office at the first floor level, and offices and examination rooms for Federal employee candidates at the second floor level. It has subsequently been used as the headquarters of the Butler County Board of Elections, and currently, the Butler County Board of Health. The exterior of the building is classically composed in its bilateral symmetry, and has a raised stone water table. A central, symmetrical three bay wide flight of steps leads to the entrance to the building. The second story is of a lesser height than the first, is punctuated with single and ribbon windows, and topped with a full entablature with decorative modillions, egg and dart moldings and circular patterning. The primary, South Third Street and the side elevations are all five bays in width. The three central bays of the primary façade are recessed with a dominant central entrance doorway. The central bays are flanked on either side by multi-panel windows with stone lintels and surrounds, are separated from each other by the engaged columns topped with Corinthian capitals.

The rear elevation of the building comprises a projecting three bay central mass that retains the overall symmetry of the building. This unadorned elevation is constructed of stone with larger windows at the first story level and smaller windows at the second story level, these recessed within the bays. Alterations to the building include replacement windows and metal handrails set within the exterior steps that lead to the front entrance. Along with the United States Post Office Building at the intersection of Court and Front streets, this building is a significant Beaux Arts style building in the district, and one which had retained its government functions throughout its history. With its design, workmanship and materials largely intact, the Federal Building retains good integrity and is a contributing resource to the district (**Photograph 54; Figure 14**).

Non-contributing Properties

N5. McComb Jewelry Store, 11 South Third Street (1 Non-contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Commerce/Retail

Date of Construction: ca. 1902; late-1960s/early-1970s (Alterations).

Architect: Unknown

This is a small side gable building on the west side of South Third Street, adjoining the Journal News building located to its south. Constructed ca. 1902, the modest building has been used by various retail business through its history, of which the most notable was McComb Jewelry

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Store, which operated there from about 1919 to about 1970. The commercial/retail building has been extensively remodeled, with new shop front windows on the first story, newer siding on the blank wall above and replacement asphalt shingles on the upper story. The building has not retained its integrity and it is not considered a contributing building due to the extensive remodeling that it has undergone (**Photograph 55**).

N6. 14 South Third Street (associated with # C8 above)

N7. 26 South Third Street (1 Non-contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail

Current Use: Commerce/Law Office

Date of Construction: 1885

Architect: Unknown

Located at the intersection of Court and South Third streets, this is a two story building, two bays wide along South Third Street and five bays wide along Court Street. The entrance to the building is from a chamfered corner at the intersection of the two streets. The brick construction building has been extensively modified, with replacement windows and a new entrance door, as well as stucco finish at the second story level. New smaller casement windows have been retrofitted into larger openings, with the surround filled in with brickwork with brick sills and lintels. Although constructed in 1885, during the period of significance, this building has been altered significantly during the late twentieth century and thus no longer retains its historic integrity (**Photograph 74**).

N8. Lowenstein's Furniture/Ringel's Furniture Store, 223 South Third Street (1 Non-contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail – furniture stores

Current Use: Community First Solutions

Date of Construction: 1912; 2015 (Alteration).

Architect: Frederick Mueller

The six story building of reinforced concrete construction is located at the northwest corner of South Third and Ludlow Streets. The building has a rectangular footprint and is six bays wide along Ludlow Street and three bays wide along South Third Street. The first story of the building is double height and is topped with a projecting decorative stone cornice. The second story is of a lesser height but is also treated as a separate element with a shallower cornice topping its extensive window openings. All the bays in the upper stories are punctuated with ribbon casement windows, with a parapet and stone cornice at the roof level completing the composition of the facade. The brickwork in the building emphasizes horizontality with alternating layers of recessed and projecting brickwork between stories. The building is undergoing an extensive rehabilitation at the present time with external windows and doors, which comprise much of the facade, being replaced. The building was constructed in 1912, with a rear, Ludlow Street addition made in 1923. It was initially home to Lowenstein's Furniture Store, and later, the May Stern Furniture Store and the Ringel's Furniture Store. At the time of the survey, it was undergoing a major rehabilitation/renovation including the replacing of all its exterior walls with

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new walls. As a consequence of significant alterations, this property has not retained its integrity and is not a contributing resource (**Photograph 50**).

N9. Boarding House, 20 South Third Street (1 Non-contributing Building)

Historic Use: Retail/Office Space and Dwelling/Boarding House

Current Use: Retail

Date of Construction: ca. 1880s

Architect: Unknown

This three story commercial building of brick construction is five bays wide along its main, Third Street façade, with shop front windows on the first story. A central entrance to the building demarcates the retail establishments - one on each of its sides - at the first story level. All the window openings on the upper story have been bricked in, through their outlines remain clearly visible and projecting stone lintels are in place. The building has a gently sloping roof, with an exterior gable end brick chimney partly visible along its south, Court Street facade. Extended eaves embellished with brackets that hide the roof from street view along Third Street are elements of the Italianate style. While the county records indicate that the building was constructed in 1890, there is evidence that it is of earlier construction. The building has undergone some unsympathetic alterations, particularly the walling in of windows and newer shop fronts at the first floor level even as it retains much of its exterior materials and its use pattern through its history. The building has not retained its integrity because of exterior alterations, particularly the brick infill to the window openings, and it thus does not contribute to the district (**Photograph 47**).

N10. 306 South Third Street (1 Non-Contributing Building)

Historic and Current Use: Commercial/Retail and Office

Date of Construction: 1980

Architect: Builder: Unknown

This is a single story commercial building located at the southeast intersection of Ludlow and South Third streets. The building is of concrete construction with brick walls, has a rectangular footprint with store-front casement windows and recessed entrances facing South Third Street. Constructed after the period of significance, this is a non-contributing resource currently being used as retail and office space (**Photograph 56**).

Court Street

The district comprises buildings located on Court Street from its intersection with South Front Street to its intersection with South Third Street. Court Street between South Front Street and South Second Street includes the Butler County Court House on the north face and the United States Post Office Building to its south, both associated with the civic and government history of the district. A parking lot associated with the post office and the Butler County prison (located further south and outside the district boundary), and the Home Furnishings building at the Second Street intersection complete this block. Two churches and the former Marvin Hotel

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building located near the intersection of South Front and Court Street are discussed later, in the South Front Street section below.

The block between South Second and Journal Square comprises two buildings – the Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company Men’s Furnishing Store at the South Second Street intersection discussed earlier, and the modest single story mid-twentieth century modernistic Hieb according to photo Building on the south face. Further east are the Journal News Building that dominates the block between Journal Square and South Third Street, the Home Loan and Building Association (Chaco Credit Union, C26) building, and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple. Buildings flanking Court Street then represent a diversity of architectural styles ranging from Beaux-Arts classicism and Gothic Revival to mid-twentieth century modernist. These buildings continue to serve commercial, civic, and social uses. There are four contributing and one non-contributing buildings located on Court Street, apart from the court house, the churches, the Home Loan and Building Association, the Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company Men’s Furnishing Store and other buildings described in association with the intersecting streets on which they stand. The contributing and non-contributing buildings on Court Street are described below **(Photographs 57-61)**.

Contributing Properties

C31. United States Post Office, 105 Court Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic and Current Use: Civic/United States Post Office

Date of Construction 1933

Architect: James A. Westmore, Supervising Architect

The Beaux Arts style Post Office Building is located at the intersection of Court Street and Front Street, with the main façade facing Court Street. The construction of the building was completed in 1933; James A. Westmore was the supervising architect. This is a two story building of concrete construction with stone-faced exterior walls, about 100 feet by 140 feet in footprint. The entrance is dominated by a double height portico extending over six central bays and supported by six Corinthian columns. The front facade is eight bays wide and the side facade ten bays wide, with each bay marked by a square, engaged column. Tall, multi-paneled rectangular windows punctuate each bay on both stories, with trellised, arched fanlights over the first story windows on the front facade. Exterior alterations to the building include a newer loading dock at the rear /parking area, and hand rails over the newly finished main staircase. The first floor of the interior retains much of its original shape and form, with newer safety glass separating the counters from the customer area. WPA commissioned murals depicting the early history of Hamilton, the paper mills and other factories that it was known for during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, adorn the walls above the entrances to the building. The building retains its historic architectural character, with Beaux Arts style features such as bilaterally symmetrical facades and layout, the use of Classical motifs and decorative elements, grand entrances, flat or low pitched roofs, and rounded arch openings clearly visible. The integrity of design, material and workmanship is retained, taking into consideration the additions and alterations to the rear façade. As observed during the survey of the interior lobby, WPA murals also retain their integrity and are significant elements of the history of the building and its period

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of construction. The building is thus a contributing resource to the district. **(Photographs 62-64; Figure 18).**

C32. Hieb Building, 221-225 Court Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Retail, Office, Restaurant

Current Use: Commerce/Retail, Office, Restaurant

Date of Construction: 1961

Architect: Unknown

Located at 221-225 Court Street, the Heib Building is a single story commercial/retail building constructed in 1961, and representative of a modest mid-twentieth century modern building. Kostas Restaurant, which had operated at an earlier building at this location since about 1950, continues to operate in this building, along with other offices and retail establishments. The street front comprises of three retail spaces, each with its own glass store-front and entrance. Entrances to the establishments, which include a restaurant and printing/graphics service, are set in recesses created by the bay front windows. The flat canopy is supported in part by metallic posts set within the recesses created by the set-back display windows. Decorative trellised concrete blocks, commonly used during the mid-twentieth century, clad the exterior wall above the canopy. The building is among a few newly constructed mid-twentieth century modern retail establishments with store-front windows and entrances, retains its integrity and is a contributing resource to the district **(Photograph 65).**

C33. Hamilton Democrat/Journal News/Butler Tech School of Arts, 224-234 Court Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Commerce/Newspaper Office and Press

Current Use: Education/Butler Tech School of Arts

Date of Construction: 1887 (Original Building), 1911 (Addition), 1948 (Addition)

Architect: George Barkman, 1911 Addition

The Journal News Building comprises an original building constructed in 1887 at 224-228 Court Street and two later additions. The original building was constructed for the *Hamilton Democrat* newspaper in 1887. Consolidation of local newspapers in the city meant that by the time the 1911 building was constructed, the premise was owned by the *Hamilton Evening Journal*. The mid-twentieth century modern press building was constructed for the *Hamilton Journal News*. The 1911 addition at the intersection of Court Street and Journal Square comprised of an additional story for the original building and a four story wing along Court Street (*Hamilton Evening Journal*, December 20, 1911); the 1948 addition for a modern printing press extended to South Third Street.

The original building, 27 feet by 88 feet, stands at the intersection of Court Street and Journal Square, with the longer five-bay facade overlooking Journal Square. This brick building has a stone foundation. Its five bays are separated by engaged columns, with three windows on each story of the central bay and two on each story of those flanking its either side. Windows on the first level are arched double-hung, while those on the upper levels are rectangular double hung. The two bay facade along Court Street is similarly composed, though finished with newer stone

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cladding. The building has elements of the Romanesque Revival style, including masonry construction, brick corbelling, and rounded arched windows at the first story level. Windows on the first story level are arched double-hung, while those on the upper stories are rectangular double hung. A three story, 1911 stone-clad addition to this original building, 102 feet by 40 feet, faces Court Street. The cladding extends across the south face of the original building. The addition was constructed in character with the original, with a raised foundation to accommodate the basement, arched windows at the first floor level and rectangular windows at the second floor level. Apart from the addition, the 1911 alterations included the construction of a third story over the original building. The third floor was covered with a hipped roof punctuated with dormers and marked by extended eaves, which are elements of the Italianate and Renaissance Revival styles. The 1948 addition, which shares common walls with the older properties, is a two story mid-twentieth century modern industrial building five bays wide on both facades. The building, with a footprint of 60 feet by 102 feet, has a granite clad base, and large, with square multi-panel aluminum frame windows marking the bays at the first story level and rectangular ribbon aluminum frame windows at the shorter second level. A large entrance gate at the intersection of the 1911 and 1948 buildings has been fitted with a glass curtain wall in character with the large windows.

Also known as the Historic Journal News Building, the property was rehabilitated in about 2012 to house the Butler Tech School of Arts, Hamilton. The interior of the rehabilitated building has been repurposed to be used as classrooms, studios, and administrative spaces for the educational institution. The large, open space of the former printing press in the mid-twentieth century addition has been converted to a studio/rehearsal space for the performing arts. The original building and additions retain their inter-connectedness and overall circulation pattern. Constituting one of the largest properties in the district, the Journal News building retains its integrity, its appearance presenting the history of the newspaper as it consolidated, grew and modernized from its origins in the late nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth century **(Photograph 43, 60, 66)**.

C34. Independent Order of Oddfellows Hall/Chaco Credit Union, 309 Court Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Social/Fraternal Organization

Current Use: Social/Fraternal Organization, and Commerce/Bank

Date of Construction: 1928

Architect: Unknown

This is a two story brick building with a brick and stone clad front façade punctuated by six evenly spaced rectangular windows on the upper story. This building was constructed as the meeting hall for the fraternal organization, the Independent order of Odd Fellows, in 1928. This organization had previously met at other locations in the city, including the Mehas Music Building at 245 High Street during the late nineteenth century. The second floor of the building remains home to the fraternal organization, while the first floor is currently used by the Chaco Credit Union, which also occupied the neighboring, attached Home Loan and Building Association building. The first story of the building is marked by an arched entrance at the east end and a newer central, glass display window and entry-way. This story has been modified with

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a later brick veneer cladding and the bricking in of an older arched opening. To the east of the building is a parking lot, from where its blank side facade of brick construction is visible. The second story of the building retains its stone cladding, and six evenly spaced rectangular windows of which the central four are enclosed within an arched surround. A stepped parapet extends up, aligned with the plane of the façade hiding the flat roof over the building. The west façade of the building, visible from the adjacent parking lot, is bank and constructed of brick. The building displays elements of Second Renaissance, style, including rounded arches over the doorways of the symmetrically composed façade, and the simple, classical details at the second story and parapet levels. While modifications such as new doors and window displays are visible along the façade, this building retains its character-defining design elements and exterior materials. It retains its integrity and is a contributing resource to the district (**Photograph 61**).

Non-Contributing Properties

N11. 231 Court Street (1 Non-contributing Building)
Historic and Current Use: Commerce/Bank
Date of Construction: 1982

Currently home to US Bank, this single story brick building, with drive-through ATMs and banking windows was constructed in 1982. To its east, at the intersection of Court Street and South Second Street is a large parking lot, in part associated with the establishment. Among the few buildings in the district constructed after the period of significance, this building does not contribute to the district (**Photograph 65-to the left**).

Ludlow Street

The district includes Ludlow Street between its intersections with South Second and South Third Street, and extends an additional half a block west of South Third Street. Apart from buildings at the South Third Street intersection the boundary excludes the south face of Ludlow Street. This portion of the 66 feet wide Ludlow Street is made up mainly of parking lots and buildings fashioned after the period of significance, which lie outside the district boundary. Many of the notable buildings that face Ludlow Street are at the intersections of other streets, and have been discussed in their context. These include the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell building, Ringel's Furniture building, the Federal Building, the Harry Strauss/Joffe Furniture Building (**Photographs 56 and 67**). There is one remaining contributing property located at 311 Ludlow Street, which is described below.

Contributing Property

C35. Furniture Store/311 Ludlow Street (1 Contributing Building)
Historic Use: Commerce/Retail and Dwelling/Apartments
Current Use: Not in use
Date of Construction: ca. 1875
Architect: Unknown

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This is a three story, brick, mixed-use retail and apartment building, located on the south side of Ludlow Street. Constructed in ca. 1875, the building housed retail establishments in the lower level, of which furniture and used furniture stores were the most notable and long lasting businesses. The upper floor was typically used as two apartment dwellings. The first story of the symmetrically composed façade is comprised of a central entrance flanked by three multi-panel shop front windows on either side, separated with engaged square columns. Elements of the Italianate style are present at the upper story and roof level of the building. The seven bay wide upper story comprises of two over two double hung arched windows with segmented hood molding - one for each bay. The two stories are separated by a frieze and a boxed cornice, and the roofline is marked with extended eaves with brackets over the entablature. The side elevations are constructed of brick. There are three brick chimneys visible along each of the two side facades along the line of the roof that slopes gently towards the rear, east side of the building. Elements of the Italianate style include second story segmental arched windows and extended, bracketed eaves at the roof level of the building. The building thus retains historic design elements and its historic appearance; it retains its integrity and is a contributing resource to the district (**Photographs 56 and 67**).

Maple Street

The one block wide Maple Avenue connects South Third Street to Martin Luther King Avenue. Only one building is located within the district boundary, which extends roughly midway through the block, on the south side of Maple Avenue. The modest two-story mixed use building is flanked on either side by vacant lots. This single remaining building is a contributing resource to the historic district, and is described below.

Contributing Property

C36. Law Office, 315 Maple Street (1 Contributing Building)
Historic Use: Commerce/Retail and Dining; Dwelling
Current Use: Butler County Bar Association, Law Office
Date of Construction: 1899

This small two-story brick and frame building is east of the intersection of Maple Street with Third Street. The building was constructed in 1899, and was used for retail at the first floor level and as dwelling at the second floor level. During the twentieth century, it was home to the Kroger Grocery store and from 1954 to 1966, the Ohio Lunch Room, a restaurant that subsequently moved to 332 High Street. The three-bay wide, central upper story, covered with a gable roof, is set back from the first story along the street facing north façade and the east façade. The windows are typically topped with wooden lintels and are either single fixed panel as at the first story level or one over one double hung types. The simple, mixed use vernacular building maintains its original form and shape, with newer windows and vinyl siding along the side and rear facades, and retains its historic integrity (**Photograph 69**). It is a contributing building to the historic district.

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A short, one block stretch of South Front Street, from its intersection with High Street to the north and Court Street to the south is included within the district boundary. The Butler County Courthouse dominates the east side of the street. On the west side, across from the courthouse is the Front Street Presbyterian Church and associated additions. The Marvin Hotel located at the northwest intersection of Court and South Front streets, is now part of the Church property, which thus effectively covers the entire block between High and Court Streets. The United States Post Office is located diagonally across from the three story Marvin Hotel building also at the Court Street intersection. Immediately south of the Front Street Presbyterian Church is the renovated St. Mary's Catholic Church of God. The contributing Butler County Court House and the United States Post Office have been described earlier. The Marvin Hotel and the Front Street Presbyterian Church, are contributing properties, while the St. Mary Catholic Church is non-contributing, as described below **(Photographs 70, 72)**.

Contributing Properties

C37. Front Street Presbyterian Church, 19 South Front Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Uses: Front Street Presbyterian Church

Current Use: Front Street Presbyterian Church

Date of Construction: 1855 (Original), Remodeling (1940), 1960 (Addition)

Architect: Unknown

The Front Street Presbyterian Church property includes an original building, with an addition and associated parking lots which together occupy almost an entire block on the west side of Front Street between High and Court Street. The church was constructed in 1855, and extensively remodeled in 1940. The addition was constructed in 1960. The church is a Renaissance Revival style brick building. The three-bay, gable-front main elevation has a central square tower with an entryway set within a concrete surround topped with a pediment. Paired arched windows are set on either side of the symmetrical facade. Above the entrance is an elongated, paired arched window. The lower portion of the tower is constructed of brick with rose windows on three sides, the tower rising to the wooden steeple capped with a hexagonal roof. An L-shaped addition adjoining the north facade of the church forms an open court, set at a floor level below Front Street from where it can be accessed via an exterior staircase. The addition is a flat-roofed building, two stories in height at street level with a brick veneer exterior. The windows are rectangular double hung. The main entrance to the building is via a concrete construction doorway facing South Front Street. The surround here is of the same construction, material and character as that of the church building, indicating that both were built around the same time. A continuous belt course runs beneath the first story of the church building as well as the addition. The roofline of the addition is marked by a corbelled stone cornice. Alterations to the church building include a newer brick veneer finish to match that of the addition, and the new surround framing the main entryway. A historic social and religious institution in Hamilton, the church retains many of its original Renaissance Revival elements including elements such as rounded arches and symmetrical organization of the plan, and thus its historic appearance and integrity. The property is a contributing resource to the historic district **(Photographs 70, 71)**.

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C38. Marvin Hotel, 23 South Front Street (1 Contributing Building)

Original Use: Commerce/ Hotel

Current Use: Social and Religious/Church Offices and Boarding House

Date of Construction: 1906

This three and a half story brick building, which harbors elements of Italianate and Renaissance Revival styles, is located at the northwest intersection of Court and Front Streets. The facade is three bays wide with an entrance located at the northern bay, while an eleven uneven bay side façade looks towards Court Street. Each bay is marked by a double hung window with replacement panels with those facing Front Street wider than those along the side elevation. The store-front windows along the first story of the Front Street facade have been altered. The six course bond brick facade has been painted white throughout and is punctuated with metallic, star shaped medallions between stories along the side elevation. A newer metal stairway and landing provide access to the side entrance of the building where the street level drops towards the river to the west. A belt-course and a full entablature covered with the roof's extended, bracketed eaves brings focus to the upper level of the building. A decorative dormer window along the main Front Street facade, along with nine functional dormers along the side facade characterize the roof. The decorative dormer is marked by corbelled brick work and a segmental arch of radiating brick voussoirs surrounding the opening. In spite of modifications such as the new window panels, the building retains much of its original form and shape, and thus its historic integrity. The Marvin Hotel retains elements of the Italianate and Renaissance Revival styles, including the symmetrical front façade, rectangular double hung windows and low pitched roof with extended, bracketed eaves. It thus retains its integrity and is a contributing resource to the historic district (**Photograph 72**).

C39. St. Mary's Catholic Church of God/Front Street Church of God, 111 South Front Street (1 Contributing Building)

Historic Use: Social and Religious/Church and Parochial School

Current Use: Social and Religious/Church and Parochial School

Date of Construction: 1856 (Original), 1974 (Alteration)

The Front Street Church of God property includes the church and an associated parking lot. The Gothic Revival style church building has a gable end, three bay wide front façade and a five bay wide side façade. The high foundation is constructed of rough-hewn stone laid in regular courses, with a stone table. The basement is discernible by full-height windows, some of which have been walled in or shuttered. The building has a brick, six course bond facade throughout. The front facade comprises a central entryway flanked by arched openings that have been walled in with brickwork. Five pointed arched windows, with the last bay walled in, mark the side facades of the building. A parking lot is located to the south of the church and its addition. The church building was constructed in 1856 and was severely damaged in a fire in 1972, with its interior gutted. In 1974, the building underwent major repairs and renovation, including the installation of new windows, the walling in of some existing arched openings, and an unsympathetic sandblasting of the exterior walls. The interior of the building was remodeled at the time. Taking into consideration these alterations, the building retains its significant

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architectural elements, such as the composition of its facades, brick façade and pointed arches that frames the openings, and continues to read as a nineteenth century Gothic Revival church. Retaining fair integrity, the building is thus a contributing resource to the district. **(Photograph 73)**.

The Hamilton Downtown Historic District comprises a cohesive physical environment that retains its integrity in association with commerce, politics and government, and architecture for the period of significance from 1855 to 1966. The layout of the roads and blocks has remained largely unaltered since the laying out of the original plat for the area. Journal Square, which was originally a vehicular connector between High and Court Streets, was landscaped, repaved, and closed to vehicles during the early 2000s. Its width and orientation, however, has remained unchanged and it continues to provide pedestrian access between the two streets. There are a total of 49 resources in the district, of which 39 retain their integrity and are contributing and 10 resources are non-contributing. All but four of the non-contributing buildings in the district were constructed during the period of significance; the remaining six have not retained their integrity. Two buildings, namely the Stengel's Furniture/Riutti Building and the Mehas Music Building were constructed during the 1870s, and were covered with metal sheathing during the mid-twentieth century. This major alteration, however, exemplifies a mid-twentieth century trend to clad and modernize older buildings to make them more economically viable. These two buildings thus also contribute to the district. Some buildings have been demolished, mainly during the mid-twentieth century, as may be observed from the interspersed vacant lots and parking lots that replaced them. Even so, the district, with almost eighty percent of its resources retaining integrity, has sufficient cohesiveness and overall integrity to represent its association with the historic development during the period of significance.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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.)

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Government and Politics

Architecture

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Period of Significance

1855-1966

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Frederick Mueller (Architect)

George Barkman (Architect)

D. W. Gibbs & Company (Architects)

Childs and Smith (Architects)

Weary and Alford (Architects)

Rapp and Rapp (Architects)

Peters, Burns, and Pretzinger (Architects)

Winkler, Ranck, and Beeghly (Architects)

Vaughn Building Company (Builder)

A. Benzing and Sons (Builder)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Hamilton Downtown Historic District is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A for its association with the pattern of events related to the history of commerce and the history of politics/government in Hamilton from ca. 1855 to 1966. It is also significant under Criterion C for the distinctive design and physical characteristics of contributing buildings, representing characteristic, popular styles from their periods of construction from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century.

A vast majority of the properties in the district housed commercial functions, ranging from retail and restaurants to offices and financial institutions. Interspersed buildings and halls in commercial buildings harbored social and cultural functions, helping define the communal character of the commercial district. The second area of significance, politics/government, arises from Hamilton's role as the seat of Butler County. The district includes three buildings, including the National Register of Historic Places listed Butler County Courthouse which occupies an entire block, associated with this theme. Along with the commercial buildings, these buildings are instrumental in defining the character of the district that also functioned as a civic center. The period of significance, 1855 to 1966, covers a time of sustained commercial growth and change that shaped the district through its history associated with patterns of commercial development and government. Properties in the district include modest buildings constructed during 1855-1887, large, architect designed buildings during a time of rapid growth and urban transformation from 1887-1940, and mid-century modern buildings constructed after the Second World War. Properties in the district are associated with both, local, retail-based commerce as well as large business and financial institutions. Almost all of the existing buildings in the district were constructed during the period of significance and exhibit their historic character and retain their historic integrity, providing a veritable narrative of the history of the district during this period of sustained growth and transformation.

The district includes buildings exemplifying and exhibiting characteristics of the French Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Victorian-Italianate, Renaissance revivals, Romanesque Revival and Richardsonian Romanesque, Art Deco, and Mid-twentieth Century Modernist styles. Even as some of the buildings have been altered over time, a majority retain their integrity of construction, craftsmanship, and materials, and thus the architectural styles associated with their periods of construction. Many existing buildings in downtown Hamilton were designed by locally significant architects Frederick Mueller and George Barkman, who made important contributions to the physical character of the district. Others have been designed by nationally known architects notable for their specialization in the design of banks and other building types.

Narrative Statement of Significance

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The area that contains the Hamilton Downtown Historic District was part of the original plat of the city of Hamilton, as recorded by Israel Ludlow in 1802 (Bartlow et al 1905:230-231; **Figures 2 and 3**). The original plat extended from the Great Miami River to the West, to the west face of Martin Luther King Street (originally Fourth Street) to the east. Along the north-south direction,

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it extended from Mill Street to about one block south of Sycamore Street. While no building from the early history of Hamilton remains standing in the present day within the district boundaries, the layout of streets, set in a grid-iron pattern in the plat remains in place and has guided the development of the downtown area through its history. As platted, all streets except for High Street were 66 feet wide. Alleys were 16 feet wide. High Street, the main street in the city, was platted as 99 feet wide. To compensate for an error in one of the measuring poles, which was three-and-a-half inches too long, High Street was made wider to retain the sizes of the lots within the plat (Bartlow et al 1905:230). As a consequence of this correction, High Street was, and remains, 120 feet wide, as illustrated in the early *Combination Atlas of Butler County* (1875: 47 and 50), various *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, and in the present day mapping (**Figures 2-8**). Early commerce in the city was dominated by agricultural trade and export of farm products from the surrounding cultivated land. The city was an important post for trade with Native Americans who came to sell their peltries to shopkeepers in Hamilton (Cone 1896:9). Hamilton quickly established civic, social and cultural institutions, such as a court, schools and newspapers that would continue to support its growth during the nineteenth century. Three key events, however, helped catalyze its rapid urbanization: the construction of the Miami Erie Canal that connected the city to the Ohio River and to Lake Erie to open new trade routes; the construction of hydraulic races from the Great Miami River, which provided hydraulic power to burgeoning industries; and the arrival of the railroad during the mid-nineteenth century.

The building of the Miami Erie Canal commenced in 1826 and in 1828, the canal extended from Cincinnati to Middletown. Hamilton's citizens petitioned for the extension of a canal branch and in 1828, the state legislature authorized its construction (Bartlow et al 1905:248). The branch ran parallel to High Street and led, via Fourth Street (present day Martin Luther King Street) to a basin located to the east of Basin Street (Court Street). The importance of the canal as a means of trade and transportation was short-lived, as the railroad, providing a more efficient mode of transportation, also started operations in Hamilton in 1851. The canal continued to provide hydraulic power to mills along its banks well after its primacy as a trade and transportation route had been supplanted by the railroad.

In 1841, the Ohio state legislature authorized the construction of a race from the Great Miami River south to Hamilton in order to provide power to mills and factories in the city. Water was brought into town via a race constructed and operated by the Hamilton Hydraulic Company from a bend in the river's path north of the city. From the river, water was fed into a reservoir to its east, and a channel from the reservoir brought it down from Fifth Street and then west along Stable Street (Market Street just north of the proposed district). As much as the Miami Erie Canal, this hydraulic, together with the race across the river in Rossville, helped trigger the industrial growth of Hamilton (Cone 1896:25-27).

The Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton Railroad Company was incorporated in 1846; construction of the railroad began in 1848, and in 1851, the first passenger ticket was sold. The railroad ran north to south along Fourth Street, crossing the Canal Basin before progressing further south. Other railroad companies soon began operations in Hamilton with tracks running east to west along Sycamore Street, and parallel to the hydraulic race on Fifth Street (Everts 1875; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1887*; **Figure 5**). Benefitting from the Miami Erie Canal, the

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hydraulic races, and the connectedness that the railroad provided with distant cities, Hamilton quickly grew into an industrial and commercial center in the Miami Valley. With a population of over 7000 residents by 1860 that grew to over 11,000 a decade later, the city was able to maintain both, a vibrant export based economy as well as retail and commerce aimed at serving its own population (United States Census Bureau).

Hamilton's commercial district, from the 1840s onward developed with High Street from the river to the canal basin about five blocks to its east forming the main axis. The canal was located to the east of the commercial district, while the hydraulic race skirted it one block to the north. The railroad followed the pattern of development set by the race and the canal. Consequently, the commercial district within which the Hamilton Downtown Historic District is located, was unaltered by the development of races and transportation networks, and retained the layout of streets and blocks of the original Hamilton plat (**Figures 2 and 3**). Much of the city's retail activity occurred along the High Street axis. Many shopkeepers and craftsmen not only operated businesses but also resided here, with shops facing the street and dwellings in the upper floors (Preston 1987: 46-47). The commercial center of the city was also the social and cultural hub; retail establishments such as restaurants as well as the remaining early churches, meeting venues for fraternal and social organizations, and theatres in the district provide evidence of its social and cultural significance. That the city was also the Butler County seat added civic and government functions, with buildings related to these activities providing another layer of significance to the pattern of community development.

Commerce in an Industrializing City: 1855-1886

From 1855 to about 1886, Hamilton's downtown developed rapidly, in keeping with the population growth that came with its industrialization. Since its early years, Hamilton's retailers typically purchased much of their stocks from merchant whole-sellers. Although this trend continued into the mid-nineteenth century, it was increasingly supplemented by specialized, local business. For instance, while early retailers purchased shoes, cigars, and other goods from merchants, by the mid-twentieth century, local, small-scale manufacture of these types of goods by the retailers grew to supplement the imported products that were also sold in stores. Early Hamilton trade was often based upon a barter system for exchange of local goods for imports. The dependence on barter diminished as cash and credit became increasingly dominant (Preston 1987: 203). Among Hamilton's 1,187 property holders, according to the United States Census of 1860, there were 93 professionals (which would include doctors, dentists, and lawyers), 114 merchants and retailers, 81 miscellaneous businesses, and 17 service persons, together comprising about a third of all property holders by profession (cited in Preston 1987: 201).

Guided by the grid of the original plat, the business district around High Street grew to support the mix of local retail and small-scale manufacturing and an export-import based market of Hamilton. The area comprised of modest two and three story buildings with street facing shops at the first floor level and workshops, offices, and dwellings at the upper floor levels. Larger commercial blocks were located mainly along High Street. Single family homes and row-house type dwellings that shared walls were located between business establishments, even along the busy main artery, High Street. The *Williams' Directory 1875-1876* business listings provide a

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snapshot of the multiplicity of small retailers and businesses, interspersed with larger establishments, during the period. Groceries, Drug Stores, Men's and Women's Furnishings and Clothes, Shoes and Boots, Confections, Coffee, Tea, Spices, Cigars and Tobacco all had their specialized retail stores, located within the historic district. These retail stores were intermingled with professional services such as those of doctors, dentists, lawyers, and other specialized trades such as those of barbers, carpenters, contractors, blacksmiths, roofers, tailors and dressmakers. Hotels and boardinghouses provide accommodation to visitors, and saloons and restaurants served both local citizens and visitors. Churches and meeting halls in commercial buildings provided communal and social meeting spaces for the community. Most of the retail and business was housed in one to three story buildings of modest size, which often shared their lateral walls with each other. Civic and infrastructure improvements, including the establishment of a fire department in 1869, a police force in 1875, the laying out of city operated Water Works in 1884 and Gas Works in 1887, aided burgeoning businesses in the city's commercial and business district (Blount 1991: 7).

The city's industrial growth during the period helped local commerce. Hamilton's early industries thrived, making the city a viable location for the growth of new industries and the relocation of plants from neighboring cities. Several newer manufactories, such as Bentel and Margedant Company that made wood-working machinery, the Sohn and Rentschler Company that manufactured castings, H. P. Deuscher Company that made agricultural implements and related machinery, the Hooven, Owens and Rentschler Company that manufactured Corliss style engines, exemplified the growth of the city's industrial base. By providing incentives such as free land to build upon, Hamilton was also able to attract companies like the Niles Tool Works to relocate from Cincinnati (Bartlow 1905: 252-256). A consequence of the rapid industrial development of the city during the latter half of the nineteenth century was its demographic growth. The city's population grew from about 7,000 in 1860 to 11,000 a decade later and to over 17,000 by 1890 (U.S. Census Bureau). Hamilton's commercial activity also picked up pace with the growing population.

Institutions such as banks and newspapers, which had short lives in the early history of Hamilton, now had a larger population to serve in a thriving economy. The Bank of Hamilton, the city's first, was established in 1817, only to close business in 1842 after a series of financial reversals (Bartlow 1905: 257; Cone 1896: 166-167). A private bank opened by Dr. John Peck at the corner of Court and Third Streets lasted only from 1857 to 1861. The Shaffer and Curtis Bank, which opened after the collapse of the Bank of Hamilton, lasted longer, but suffered a similar fate as the other early banks and closed its doors in 1885 (Bartlow 1905: 257; Cone 1896: 167). New banks, particularly the First National Bank and the Second National Bank, which began operations following the passing of the National Banking Act, in 1863 and 1865 respectively, had a lasting presence and impact in the Hamilton.

The First National Bank was located, according to the *William's Directory* of 1875-1876, in Beckett's Block located at 214 High Street— a building that was demolished in the twentieth century. The bank moved to the Shuler & Benninghofen Block, constructed in 1885, at the east corner of High and North Third streets (*Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1887*). The Shuler & Benninghofen Block was also demolished in 1927 for the construction of a new First National

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Bank that year. The Second National Bank opened in the Hamilton House Building at 144 High Street, and moved later to the north side of High Street between Second and Third streets (*Williams and Company*, 1875-1876; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Company* 1887). A new building for the bank was constructed across the street near Journal Square in 1931. Organized during a time when the Civil War was affecting trade and commerce in Hamilton and other cities, these banks were significant in securing the financial viability of the city's business and industrial institutions, and continued to be of service to prominent citizens and business establishments of the city through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Cone 1896: 166-169).

Hamilton had had printed weekly newspapers since 1814, when the *Hamilton Intelligencer* was published. The *Hamilton Daily News*, established in 1879 was the first daily newspaper – one which served the entire Butler County. The coming decades saw the publication of several new newspapers. Some of these, such as the *Hamilton Herald* (1883-1885) were short-lived; others merged or were acquired by other newspapers. The *Hamilton Daily News* and the *Daily Democrat*, which began publication in 1886 as an upgrade of the weekly *Butler County Democrat*, grew by merging with other newspapers through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The successors of these newspapers ultimately became the *Hamilton Journal-News* by the mid-twentieth century. The construction of the two story *Daily Democrat* building at the Court Street and Journal Square (then known as Reily Street) corner in 1886 established the presence of the newspaper in the historic district. Depicted for the first time in the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* of 1892 (**Figure 6**), the *Daily Democrat* newspaper building was among the few that were built to house a one primary business establishment. As the paper merged with other newspapers, the building was also added to twice during the twentieth century, eventually occupying 224-228 Court Street, the entire length of the block from Journal Square to Third Street.

The *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* of 1887, the first for Hamilton produced by the company depicts the pattern of growth of primarily small and modest sized, independent retailers and businesses within the district. The street facing shops typically had narrow facades of about 25 feet to 35 feet in width and depths of up to two to three times the width. The shops and businesses had similar proportions even when they were located at the first floor level of larger buildings, such as the Dixon Opera building, Beckett's block, and Shuler and Beninghofen Block. Accesses to the upper floors, in large buildings or small, were usually from a separate entrance from the street, which led to a small lobby and straight flights of stairs (**Figure 5**). Many of these early buildings remain standing in the historic district, and continue to retain their commercial and retail uses, even as the types of shops and businesses they house are contemporary. Existing buildings at 254 High Street, 235-241 High Street, 245 High Street, Stengel's Furnishings building at South Second and Court street corner, and the Blumenthal and Schloss store at 20 South Third Street are important examples of these types of buildings.

Constructed ca. 1875, the three story building at 254 High Street (C7) at the North Third Street corner is among the oldest commercial properties in the district. According to the *Williams' City Directory* of 1875-1876, the Dunkel and Fye, Grocer (renamed Jasper W. Fye during the 1880s) operated at the property. The *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from 1887 onward depict the three story building with a grocer at the first floor level. Grocery stores under different owners,

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including Fye and F. W. Wagner and Sons (*Williams' Directory* 1910) and Dreyfus Brothers (**Figure 10**) continued to operate there through the early twentieth century. As was typical for commercial buildings in the district, the upper floors were used by the dentists and other businesses into the twentieth century (*Williams' Directory* 1898-1899; 1906). The Howe Drug Shop and the Miami Outfitting Company operated herein the 1920s and the 1930s. During the mid-twentieth century, the building was a location for various retail businesses, offices, and a restaurant. The side entrance of the building, with the address 7 North Third Street was occupied by the Miami Business College and the Commonwealth Loan Company during the mid-twentieth century (*Williams' Directories*, 1919-1920, 1930s, 1940-1941, 1951, and 1960). The building was rehabilitated in 2013-2014, after which the first floor of the building is used as a gift and décor shop.

The property at 235-241 High Street comprises of two three story buildings at 235 and 237-241 High Street (N1 and N2) respectively, with shared side walls (**Figure 9**). They were constructed ca. 1883-1885 as mixed-use type with retail at the first floor level and offices above. The building at 235 High Street was occupied by the William Winkler's hat store from about 1883 to the 1920s – a business that grew into Winkler and Straub men's clothes store and a parcel delivery service (*Williams' and Company*, various years). Dating from the early 1940s to the 1960s, the location was home to Jonson's Restaurant. The 1887 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* shows that 237-241 High Street was occupied by a furnishings store and a saloon. As listed in the *Williams' Directory* (1898-1899 to 1919-1920) and depicted in *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* of 1899, 1927 and 1950, the 237-241 High Street building was occupied by the Siedenstickers Silver-plated Ware store and an optician's office. The building was home to the F. W. Woolworth department store from about 1922 to 1954. After 1954, various businesses, including the Martin Town and Country Fashions clothing store (*Williams' and Company* 1966) and a thrift shop were located there. In 2007 both the buildings were brought and extensively rehabilitated as Ryan's Tavern, with the bar area located within 235 High Street and the restaurant in 237-241 High Street.

Two three story buildings at 245 High Street (originally 243 and 245 High Street, C13, C14) were constructed ca. 1870 (**Figure 9**). The original 245 High Street Building was constructed to house the Fitton and Brother Store, replacing another commercial building at the location (Cone 1896:18). Fitton and Brother's retail business dealt in dry goods and also operated a pattern agency and tailoring business at the location. During the 1880s-1890s, the building continued to be home to the renamed D. W. Fitton and Company Dry Goods Store (*Williams' Directory* 1883-1884-1898-1899; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* 1887). The second floor was used as office space. Later during the twentieth century, 245 High Street was home to several different retail establishments, including the Lewis Cigar Company during the 1930s, the Heyman Fisher Clothing Store from about 1929 to the mid-1960s, and the Meyer Jewelry Company from the 1940s to the mid-1970s, (*Williams' Directory* 1929-1930; 1941; 1951; 1966; 1971, 1975). With the Independent Order of Odd Fellows meeting hall at the third floor level of this building from about 1898 to about 1920, the building demonstrates the confluence of commercial and social uses provided by a single building (*Williams' Directory* 1898-99 to 1919-1920). The neighboring building at 243 High Street housed saloons, restaurants and other retail establishments at the first floor level and offices and other businesses at the upper floor level. The two were wrapped in a

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single corrugated steel cover during the early 1960s, and have since had the appearance of a single building, home to Mehas Music since 1976 (*Williams' Directory* 1976).

Located at the southwest corner of South Second and Court streets, the three story Stengel's Furnishings/Reutti Furniture Store (C24) building was constructed ca. 1870 for the Stengel Brothers furnishing and upholstery store (*Williams' Directory* 1875-1876, 1883-1884). The Stengel's Furniture business was founded in 1860 by Cass Stengel. After his death in 1883, the business was managed by his widow, the three story building then known as Stengel's Block. The furniture dealer sold "everything which may belong to the furnishing of a house...including all kinds of chamber furniture, lounges, chairs, tables, desks, hall furniture...at the lowest possible prices (International Publishers 1886: 263)." Stengel's was among the early large furniture dealerships in Hamilton, setting the stage for other large furniture stores that would open business later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The building has remained associated, through its history, with furniture retail. From the 1890s to the 1930s, the building was home to the Reutti and Company furniture store, and was thus called the Reutti Building. Before closing business during the early 2000s, the Home Furnishings Store operated at the location.

Smaller buildings associated with commerce include the Dunlap Building at 18 South Third Street (C25), Blumenthal and Schloss building at 20 South Third Street (N9), 26 South Third Street (N7) and 311 Ludlow Street (C35). Located at 20 South Third Street near its intersection with Court Street is the former Blumenthal and Schloss men's furnishings store. In 1875-1876, William Andre operated a boarding house at the location. A salon and a grocery store at the first floor level and County Offices and courthouse at the second floor level in 1887, making the building significant also for its association with the county government (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1887). The building was occupied by other businesses, including the New York Racket Store during the early twentieth century (*Williams' Directory* 1917-1918). From the mid-1920s to the 1940s, the building was the location of the men's furnishings store of Blumenthal and Schloss (*Williams' Directory* 1927, 1929-1930, 1935-36, 1941). Constructed in about 1887 (*Sanborn Fire Insurance Company*) the building at 18 South Third Street was occupied by drug stores during the late nineteenth to early decades of the twentieth centuries. The pharmacy businesses of Constantine Markt operated here during the late nineteenth century and that of druggist D. R. Byard from the 1900s to the early 1920s. From about 1931 to 1984 the Dunlap Clothing Company occupied the building (*Williams' Directory*).

A clothing store operated at the modest 26 South Third Street building in 1887 (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company). Later, the William A. Harrison Saloon (ca. 1910-1920), an Army and Navy Clothing Store (ca. 1920-1930s), and a dry-cleaner store (ca.1940-1950). The building has been used as a retail establishment until the 1970s by modest businesses, and has been intermittently vacant (*Williams' Directory*, various years). The two story building at 311 Ludlow Street was constructed ca.1875. The 1887 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* shows that the first floor was occupied by a confectionery, while the upper floor was used partly as a dwelling and partly as a cigar factory at the time. Since about 1917, the building has been associated with furniture retail business. The Harry Strauss Furniture store occupied the first floor of the building from about 1917 to 1920, after which it moved to 220-224 South Third Street (*Williams' Directory* 1917,

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1919-1920, 1921-1922). The property remained associated with furniture retail businesses through the twentieth century.

Through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Hamilton's downtown was its commercial district as well as a residential one. Single dwellings filled gaps between business and retail establishments; often, the upper floors above the shops were used as dwellings, as in the case of 311 Ludlow Street (C35). Neighborhoods such as Dayton Street and German Village that were primarily residential were also located in close proximity to the commercial district. A consequence of this arrangement was that the commercial district was also a communal hub with churches, meeting halls and music halls and theatres often housed in larger commercial or multi-purpose buildings.

The influx of German immigrants led to the establishment of several German Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches in the city. Churches and social organizations provided a sense of community and support to migrants, who arrived in growing numbers to the industrializing city during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Located at 19 South Front Street, the Front Street Presbyterian Church (C37) was the first to be established in the city in 1810. In 1817, the institution, which had united with a second Presbyterian church to form the Union Presbyterian Church, constructed its first building on the east side of the intersection of Court and South Third streets. The church moved to two other locations before constructing the building at 19 South Front Street in 1854-1855 (Bartlow 1905: 270-271). An earlier church was built at this location in 1838, to be replaced by this building in 1855. In 1940 the church building was remodeled and enlarged. In 1960, an addition was built and the church was further enlarged. The addition is used as a preschool and for the offices of the church.

Irish immigrants, who came to the Miami Valley as laborers for the construction of the Miami Erie Canal, also established their own churches as they settled in Hamilton and other cities there. A church was constructed at 111 South Front Street by Irish Catholic immigrants to Hamilton as the St. Mary's Catholic Church (C39) in 1856 on a site of a former Episcopalian church, with the help of volunteers to offset the costs associated with the project. Soon after the construction of the church, a parochial school was established in its basement. The addition, a new school building, was constructed in 1890. The church building was severely damaged in a fire in 1972, with its interior gutted. In 1974, the building underwent major repairs and modern renovation, including the remodeling of the interior. The school building indicated in *Sanborn Fire Insurance maps* from 1892 to 1950, has since been removed.

The Dixon (later, Globe) Opera House (C4) at 10 Journal Square at the High Street intersection opened in 1866, and was the city's leading venue for dramatic and musical productions through the nineteenth century (**Figure 10**). The theatre also hosted famous lectures and civic meetings until 1904. The theatre was located at the third floor level, with the lower floors used for retail and business offices. Following a fire in the Iroquois Theatre in Chicago in 1903, the Globe Opera (as it was by then known), with its theatre located at the third floor level, was deemed unsafe and closed operation. Hamilton officials, who inspected the building after the Chicago fire, attested that it was "insecure in case of a panic from fire, and that the exits from the theatre would not near accommodate the audiences it had been accustomed to contain (Blount, July 5,

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2006)." The closing of the theatre made the way for Robinson-Schwenn Company Store that took its place. As the city and its commercial activity expanded during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, newer halls and theatres woven into the commercial district would continue to for communal and cultural activity, as discussed below.

Commerce in an Industrial City: 1887-1940

From the late-1880s to the early 1930s, Hamilton's history of commerce was manifested in the continued operation of modest retail establishments, the expansion of larger business institutions, and the founding in the city of expansive retail and department stores, occupying multiple floors in large buildings. The city experienced rapid growth, its population increasing from almost 24,000 in 1900 to over 52,000 persons in 1930. Hamilton's older industries expanded their operations, and along with new industries, exported their product throughout the United States as well as foreign markets. Commercial development paralleled the industrial growth of the city, serving not its growing demography, but also a larger market throughout Miami Valley, Ohio and even distant parts of the country. Department stores, wholesale groceries, and large furniture stores stood side-by-side with those owned by local merchants. New, large hotels profited from the city's growth as did the older modest hotels and guest houses.

While cities in the Miami Valley had been flooded periodically during the nineteenth century, none of the deluges were as destructive as the Great Flood of 1913. Several days of heavy rain caused rivers in Ohio and Indiana to flood between March 23rd and March 26th of that year, causing enormous damage cities along their banks. The Great Miami River in Hamilton overflowed on March 25th and crested a day later. Taking two days to recede, the waters caused great damage to the city and its businesses with an estimated property damage of over fifteen million dollars, with over two hundred lives lost in the city. As documented in the *Hamilton Flood Souvenir* (Republican Publishing Company 1913), over five hundred homes and four bridges over the Great Miami River were destroyed. While the large, soundly built edifices of downtown Hamilton survived the floods, the souvenir documented with photographs the extensive damage that the floods caused the retail stores. Hamilton recovered from the devastation, and its commerce continued to flourish over the coming decades, attracting large chain stores to establish business there. By 1940, the physical character of the city's commercial district had changed in important ways as grandly designed buildings – many along High Street - replaced older ones.

In 1891, when Hamilton celebrated its centennial, there were three national banks, four building and loan associations, and six newspapers operating in the city. Local retail continued to dominate the streetscape. Retail groceries, dry good stores, furniture dealers, furnished goods stores, cigar stores, wholesale and retail liquor stores, book stores and piano stores lined the streets. These stores were interspersed with trades such as roofers, contractors, bricklayers, barbers, bakers and confectioners, tailors and dressmakers, book binders, jewelers and blacksmiths, hatters and shoemakers. Professionals such as physicians, attorneys, and dentists typically had their offices in the upper floors of the buildings in Hamilton's downtown. In 1891, the city had one opera house and a music hall. The city had eleven hotels, twenty-six boarding houses, thirteen restaurants and ninety-eight saloons (McClung 1891: 235-237). The business

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pages of the *Williams' Directories* for the city over the coming decades depict this proliferation of local commerce. The *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* of 1899 (**Figure 7**) shows that though new, larger buildings were constructed in downtown Hamilton during the intervening years, the district still remained a mixed-use type.

The turn of the century brought with it important changes in patterns of retail and commerce. The new developments included the arrival in Hamilton of department and national chain stores, the consolidation and expansion of older businesses and the consequent construction of new buildings associated with these institutions. Thus, some of the city's older building stock was replaced with new, architect-designed buildings. The first department store opened in 1907 in the Dixon-Globe Opera building at 10 Journal Square (C4) and was set up by Phillip Robinson and Ferdinand Schwenn, two former employees of the T. V. Howell and Son dry goods store. The Robinson-Schwenn Company, as their business was known, had obtained the lease of for the entire building that year, with the store initially occupying two floors. By 1913, the successful department store not only occupied all floors but also built an additional floor at the upper level of the former auditorium, and in the coming decades, gained a reputation as among the best stores in southwest Ohio (Walsh 2000:16). The locally owned and operated Robinson-Schwenn Company set the stage for other, national chains to open business in Hamilton, as department stores began to compete with and often supplant the specialty stores that had been the mainstay of retail commerce in the city.

By the 1920s, several retail chain and department stores, including S.S. Kresge's Variety Store at 224-226 High Street across from the district, Woolworth's Department store at 237-241 High Street (N1 and N2), and J. G. McGrory's Variety Store at 238-240 High Street (also across the street from the district), opened within a block of the Robinson-Schwenn Company store (Walsh 2000:16). During the early 1930s, the E. C. Denton Company department store shared space with the Robinson-Schwenn Company in the same building. As Walsh points out, newer modes of transportation made Hamilton more accessible for shopping to distant communities in the county. Further, at over 50,000 residents, Hamilton's own population had grown substantially by 1930, providing these large stores with a steady local market (U.S. Census Bureau). The department stores, which offered discounted prices and the convenience of shopping for a variety of goods at one location, competed with the older specialty stores so as to gradually supplant them through the mid-twentieth century.

As new buildings replacing older ones, reflecting the growth of established commercial institutions and the arrival of newer ones, Hamilton's primary artery High Street saw significant physical changes. The construction of commercial buildings by Hamilton's industrialists in the city's downtown was not by itself a new phenomenon; nineteenth century buildings such as Beckett's Hall, Reibold Block, and Schuler and Benninghofen Block on High Street, for example were associated with Hamilton's industrialists. The construction of the Rentschler Building (C2) at 6 South Second Street in 1905-1906 was nonetheless a significant event in the history of the city, one that marked the arrival of a new era in building activity in the historic district and its vicinity. The Rentschler Building (**Figure 13**) was constructed by well-established industrialist and business family of Hamilton. George Adam Rentschler, who commissioned the building, was associated with the Hoover, Owens and Rentschler Company that manufactured steam and

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diesel engines, as well as the National City Bank and other business enterprises. Designed by the architect George Barkman of Hamilton and the notable Dayton architectural firm of Peters, Burns, and Pretzinger, the eight story Rentschler Building at the southwest intersection of High and South Second streets was the tallest in Hamilton through the mid-twentieth century. The Renaissance Revival building occupied half the High Street block between Second Street and Journal Square. This intersection had previously been vacant with the exception of a detached dwelling that faced South Second Street, as seen in the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1899* (**Figure 6**). The building housed shops at the first floor, street level in character with smaller retail establishments. The upper floors were used as office spaces by businesses and professional establishments.

Known for their conservative fiscal policies, Hamilton's banks continued to thrive in the early twentieth century. Its two national banks, the First National Bank and the Second National Bank, survived the Great Depression even as other national financial institutions went under. The First National Bank had occupied a first floor space in the three story Schuler and Benninghofen building at the corner of Third and High Streets since 1886. Soon after moving there, the bank required more space because of growing business, leading it to acquire additional quarters in the same building for its use; at the onset of the twentieth century, the bank had acquired the entire building for its use. Although deemed large enough to accommodate expanded business for years to come, even this larger room had become overcrowded by the early decades of the twentieth century. The old block was demolished to make the way for the imposing building at 300 High Street (C8) designed by Chicago architects Childs and Smith to open its doors in 1931 (*Hamilton Evening Journal* August 23, 1931: 7-8). The grandly designed neo-classical building signified the importance that the financial institution had for Hamilton and its community.

Following the construction of a new building for the First National Bank was the opening of a new home for the Second National Bank. Also a long-standing financial institution, the Second National Bank had moved to four different buildings since its founding, responding each time to growing business in Hamilton. In 1925, the bank acquired the Reily Block from George Rentschler's estate and subsequently drew up plans for a new building. Designed by Chicago Architects Weary and Alford, with George Barkman as the local architect, the Art Deco style Second National Bank Building (C3) at 219 High Street contrasted with the classicism of the First National Bank building. Together, the two buildings stood as testimony to the fiscal soundness of Hamilton's business communities at the onset of the Great Depression. As contemporary newspapers articles point out, both buildings were praised not just for their fine architecture but also for the modern banking facilities and infrastructure that they housed within (*Hamilton Evening Journal*, August 23, 1930: 7-8; *Hamilton Evening Journal*, August 29, 1931: 10-11).

The construction of large commercial edifices that filled vacant lots or replaced more modest nineteenth century buildings was evident also along other streets in the district. The Home and Loan Association, a financial institution established in Hamilton in 1873, constructed a new Renaissance Revival style building (C26) at 100 South Third Street 1923 (**Figure 15**). As depicted in the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* of 1899, the lot on which it was built originally had several single dwellings and shops, all of which were removed. The association, which was

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formed to raise and provide funds for the purchase of lot and the construction and replacement of homes, earlier occupied modest quarters in the Beckett Block and the Reily Block, both on High Street. Designed by the prominent local architect Frederick Mueller, the building was described in special section of the *Hamilton Evening Journal*, September 22, 1923, as “in full keeping with its splendid tradition and history. The building, equipment and furnishing is [sic] one of the finest in the Central West, and is a great credit to the association and Hamilton.” In 1923, the association had grown to over 5000 members.

The construction of new buildings followed also the consolidation of older business institutions in the city. In 1919, the Hamilton Home Telephone Company that had provided telephone services throughout Butler County for seventeen years was purchased by the Cincinnati Bell Company so as to provide service to the over 7000 subscribers in Butler County (*The Daily Republican News*, August 12, 1919: 1). The two companies had been competitors since the turn of the century. Its long distance service provided Cincinnati Bell the advantage over the home company, leading to the acquisition and the subsequent formation of the Cincinnati & Suburban Bell Company. In about 1920, the newly formed company constructed the two story brick building located at 222 South Second Street (C23), replacing a single family dwelling that was located on the lot earlier.

In 1907, the *Hamilton Democrat* merged with the *Hamilton Daily Sun*, which had begun publication five years earlier, to form the Hamilton Democrat Sun. The newspaper was renamed *The Hamilton Evening Journal* in 1908 (Blount 2012), and Reily Street was subsequently renamed Journal Square, home to the Journal Publishing Company (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company 1927). A substantive addition to the older, 1887 Journal News building (C33), which included a third floor to the old building and a new three story building facing Court Street designed by George Barkman was constructed in 1911. This was to be the first of the two additions to the older buildings, the second of which would be completed in about 1948. By the mid-1920s, the *Hamilton Democrat* building had become the new home of the Journal Publishing Company, which published the *Evening Journal News* and other newspapers. In 1933, Hamilton became a one newspaper city, with all other newspapers either shutting or consolidating with the Journal News (Blount April 22, 2009). The new building was constructed on vacant land as depicted in *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* of the period (**Figure 8**), and did not entail the demolition of older properties. *Hamilton Journal News* remained the city’s daily newspaper until 2012, when, under new owners, it was merged with *Middletown Journal* to form the *Journal News* – an end to the era of the city newspaper. Under different owners, the building had remained the home of the Hamilton Journal newspaper until 2012, when it was purchased by Historic Journal News LLC, and rehabilitated to house, primarily, the Butler Tech School of Arts (Butler County Auditor).

Furniture stores remained an important aspect of Hamilton’s commercial activity during this period; new businesses established themselves even as the trend-setting Stengel’s/Reutti Furniture store continued to operate at the South Second and Court street corner. Three buildings at 220-224 South Third Street (C29), 216 South Third Street (C28) and at 223 South Third Street (N8), associated with retail furniture stores were constructed at its intersection with Court Street. The Harry Strauss/Joffe Furniture Company Store at 220-224 South Third Street was constructed

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in 1899 (Butler County Auditor). The building had shops at the first floor and a hall at the third floor level. Starting 1921, the Harry Strauss Furniture Company occupied the building, which thus became the second property in the district to be associated with the business (Harry Strauss Furniture had occupied the property at 311 Ludlow Street from about 1917 to 1920). From the mid-1930s to the 1950s, the building was home to the Hamilton House Bargain Furniture Company (later called Strauss's Bargain House Furniture). In 1976, the building was taken over by Joffe Furniture, and remained part of this business until the mid-1980s (*Williams' Directory* various years). A single story warehouse associated with and attached to this property was constructed at 316 Ludlow Street in about 1950.

The Trebel Building at 216 South Third Street (C28) was constructed ca. 1890 with the first floor housing retail establishments and the upper floors dwelling apartments. In *Williams' Directory* of 1919-1920 the first floor was occupied by the Anderson Piano Company and the Nuxall Bargain Store, with five apartments for dwelling on the upper two floors. Between 1940 and 1950, the upper floors were converted into the Hotel Trebel. The Joffe Furniture Store occupied the building from about 1951 to 1986 (*Williams' Directory* various years). Located at 223 South Third Street is the former Lowenstein's Furniture Company building (N8). The building was constructed, as depicted in the, in 1912 with an addition made to it in 1923 (*Sanborn Fire Insurance Company* 1927). It was home to the Lowenstein's Furniture Company from 1912 to about 1955, after which it was occupied by the May-Stern Furniture Company. In 1967, the building became home to the Ringel's Furniture store, and remained so until the 2008 (*Williams' Directory* various years; Ohio Secretary of State Business listings, www2.sos.state.oh.us).

Other buildings constructed south of High Street housed hotels, clothing stores and modest retail stores and offices. Constructed in about 1900 at 23 South Front Street was the Farmer's Hotel (C38). During World War II, the lower level of the hotel was converted into a servicemen's canteen with a coed lounge, a kitchen, and a recreation area. The canteen served over 40,000 servicemen by the time it closed in 1945 (Schwartz 1986: 23-24). The establishment was renamed the Marvin House or Hotel in about 1949 (*Williams' Directory* 1949). Currently owned by the Presbyterian Church and known as Presby House, this building houses church offices and room for shelter for the needy and homeless. Located at 118/120 South Second Street, was the Hamilton Hotel (C21), a four story Second Renaissance Revival brick building designed by Frederick Mueller and constructed in 1907-1908. This building continued to be used as a hotel until 1973, and is currently rehabilitated to be used as rental apartments (the Ohio Historic Inventory form for the property incorrectly associates it with the Mary Tule Boarding House and Hossfeld and Sons Liquor store).

The Art Deco influenced two story Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company Men's Furnishings Store (C19) at 24 South Second Street at its northeast intersection with Court Street was constructed in about 1929 with the Paramount Theatre, with which it shared its north wall. In 1941, according to the *William's Directory*, the Mayer Ladies' Wear Store operated at the location. Other retail businesses, including Martin's Women's Clothes and Dalton's Ladies' Apparel occupied the space through the period of significance. Also in 1929, another two story retail and commercial building (C20) was constructed at 110-116 South Second Street between Court Street and Ludlow Street intersections. This building, which replaced older dwellings, was

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home to restaurants and retail shops. Long-term tenants of the building included the Eatmore Restaurant and the Cohen and Schwarz Cigar store (*Williams' Directory* 1930s, 1940-41, 1950-51 and 1966). The Ohio Democratic Party headquarters were located there through the mid-twentieth century (*Williams' Directory* 1930s, 1940-41, 1950-51, 1966).

The building at 11 South Third Street (N5) was constructed in 1929 and was home to a jewelry store until the 1960s. The modest building at 315 Maple Street (C36) was constructed c. 1899, with the first floor used as a shop and office space and the upper floor used as a dwelling (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1899 and 1927). *Williams' Directory of 1929-1930* lists two retail businesses at the location, namely the Kroger Grocery and Bakery and Max Worselman Men's Furnishings stores. From 1954 to 1966, the building was home to the Ohio Lunch Room, Ohio Lunch Room moved in about 1966 to its present day location at 332 High Street. The building is currently associated with the Butler County Bar Association.

Three small buildings were constructed on the north side of High Street during this period. A three story stove retail shop at 332 High Street, George Best and Sons with a tin workshop (C10) in its rear section was constructed in about 1915. Since about 1966, the building has been used as the Ohio Lunch Room restaurant. Further east, at 350 High Street (C11) at its intersection with High Street, a 1934 two story concrete and glass building that housed the Butler County Automobile Club and the State Bureau of Motor Vehicles and later, the Firestone Auto Supply and Service Shop until the 1970s (*Williams' Directory* 1940-41, 1975). The building is currently home to the Max Stacey Florist shop. The two story Weubbold Building at 9 North Third Street is first depicted in the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. As mentioned in the *Luggage and Leather Goods* trade magazine (1907) that the H. Weubbold and Company has established a business by 1907, operating a blank book manufacturing business at the nearby 11-13 North Third Street; in 1928, the company expanded its business by constructing the Weubbold Building at 9 North Third Street (C15), occupying the upper floor of the building as well as the neighboring 11-13 North Third Street (C16) property.

The district had been, during the nineteenth century, a mixed use one that combined retail and commercial uses with dwellings. As a consequence of newer development that replaced dwellings, the area was changing primarily into a commercial district. Social and cultural activities nonetheless attracted residents of Hamilton to the commercial district. If churches reflected the communal importance of the commercial district during the earlier period, the popularity of fraternal and social organizations during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was on display in the properties constructed during this period. Fraternal and social organizations had become immensely popular in American cities during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Freemasons, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Fraternal Order of Eagles, and the Independent and Protective benevolent Order of Elks played important roles in rapidly industrializing and transforming cities such as Hamilton. They provided members with a sense of stability and community at a time of change. Fraternal organizations were formed to represent different segments of Hamilton's society, including new immigrants (such as the German Harugari, the Irish Hibernians), different religious groups (for example, the Catholic Knights of Columbus and the Jewish B'nai B'rith), and factory and other workers. They promoted morality and values that were considered positive, with their rituals and

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ceremonies providing an alternative form of recreation to those found in the bars and saloons scattered throughout the city. The period also saw the proliferation of fraternal mutual benefit societies, which provided Americans with insurance and other benefits, providing them with a social safety net at a time when there were no public alternatives (Schmidt 1980).

Hamilton's fraternal organizations typically assembled in meeting halls in the upper floors of large commercial buildings in the commercial district (Bauer 2006). Reily Block at the intersection of High Street and Journal Square was a three story building, with the entire third floor devoted to a meeting hall for the city's Freemasons. The Grand Army of the Republic met at a hall at the third floor of 243 High Street (N1, N2), - the building that is currently the location of Ryan's Tavern Restaurant. The Knights of Pythias, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Benevolent and Independent Order of Elks, and other important fraternal organizations all met in the vicinity of the commercial district, albeit outside its boundaries. Buildings on High Street such as the Beckett Block, the Howald Hotel to the east of the Friechtling Block, had meeting halls located at the upper floor levels to be used by myriad fraternal and social organizations. Of these, only the Independent Order of Odd Fellows has had a lasting presence within the district. The organization occupied hall at the third floor level of 245 High Street – currently the premises of Mehas Music (C13) at the intersection of High and South Third Street during the late nineteenth century. Later, the organization moved to the third and fourth floors of a new building located at 13-17 South Third Street, adjacent to the earlier location. It remained there until about 1928, when the new Odd Fellows Temple at 309 Court Street (C34) was constructed. The organization continues to meet at this location in the present day. The upper floor accessible from a separate entrance, is an Odd Fellows Hall in the present day, while the lower floor is used as part of the Chaco Credit Union, the bank building (formally the Home Loan and Insurance Building) which it adjoins along its west wall.

As Hamilton's population grew with its industrialization and increasing commercial activity, so also did the need for more venues for recreation and entertainment. The closing of the theatres from the earlier era, including the Music Hall in 1899 and the Globe Opera House in 1907, occurred concurrently with the opening of several new theatres and performance venues in Hamilton. By 1909, there were as many as twelve halls in the city. The 1,600 seat Jefferson Theatre (later called the Smith Theatre before reverting back to its original name in 1914) opened in 1903, its construction enabled by a community fund-raising campaign. The theatre was located in the district on the west side of South Second Street between Court Street and Ludlow Street. The popularity of vaudeville during the early years of the twentieth century led to the construction of the New Grand Theatre (later called the Regent Theatre) at 201 South Third Street, across from Maple Avenue – one with a seating capacity of eight hundred persons. Other Hamilton theatres operating during the 1900s included Grand, Bijou, Eagle, Lyric, Princess, Royal, Star, Vendome and Jewel. The Jewel Theatre, which was located near the southeast intersection of Court and South Second streets, opened in 1909 and remained in operation for almost seventeen years until the Jefferson Theatre replaced it. These theatres offered a variety of entertainment, including plays, vaudeville, musicals, and movies, which were to become increasingly popular and profitable (Blount September 14, 1999; July 5, 2006).

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The 1927 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* depicts several theatres and moving pictures (feature film) houses located in or bordering the district. These include the Jefferson Theatre at 125 South Second Street, Regent Theatre at 201 South Third Street, the Palace Theatre at 215 South Third Street (C27), as well as moving pictures theatres at Journal Square and at the intersection of North Front and Market Streets near the city hall. The Palace Theatre at opened on February 3, 1920 on South Third Street in Downtown Hamilton. The first theatre in the city built for motion pictures, the Palace was designed to replicate the famous Rivoli Theatre in New York City. Fred S. Meyer, the first managing director, assisted local architect Frederick Mueller in the design. The theatre closed in the 1950's and the building was used as office space until 2000. Greater Hamilton Civic Theatre (GHCT) acquired the building in 2004. The building is currently known as The Creative Center at the Palace and is used as a home base for GHCT, holding a rehearsal hall, costume room, set room, and office space, a restoration sympathetic in use to its original function as a movie theatre.

In 1929, at the height of the Great Depression, the Art Deco style Paramount Theatre was constructed at the intersection of Court and South Second Streets. The movie theatre was built by Paramount Pictures to show feature films produced by the studio. Designed by New York based theatre architects Rapp and Rapp, the hall had a seating capacity of over 1,800, of which 350 seats were at the upper, balcony level. The building was demolished in 1961 to make room for a parking lot associated with the adjacent Rentschler Building. The Art Deco style Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman's Company Men's Furnishings Store (C19) at 24 South Second Street, which was constructed in association with Paramount Theatre in about 1929 and likely designed by Rapp and Rapp, remains standing. The fate suffered by the Paramount Theatre was also common to other theatres in the district; even as other commercial buildings typically survived the wrecking ball during the post-World War II era, most of the theatres were demolished to make room for parking or newer buildings. Of buildings associated with entertainment and recreation, only two – the Robinson-Schwenn Company building from the nineteenth century era of theatre and musical productions, and the Palace Theatre survive.

Hamilton's economy was aided during the 1930s by Works Public Administration (WPA) projects, which played an important part in helping the city tide over the Great Depression. During the 1930s, public projects such as the filling of the Miami Erie Canal for the construction of Erie Highway, improvement of existing utilities, as well as the construction of the civic buildings such as the new post office and the Municipal Building (now known as the Mueller Building) kept workers in the city and the county employed (Blount May 13, 2009). The construction of new buildings for commercial and retail use virtually stopped during the Great Depression, after the opening of the Second National Bank and First National Bank buildings in 1930 and 1931 respectively. The trend of large department and chain stores supplanting smaller specialty stores, however, continued, from the mid-1930s, with the opening of a new department store, Wilmur's Inc. in the old Frechtling Building at the intersection of High Street and North Second Street, across from the historic district (Blount August 19, 2009).

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Commerce in the Mid-Twentieth Century: 1941-1966

Hamilton's downtown remained its dominant commercial and retail center during the mid-twentieth century, even after Interstate 75 was constructed to bypass the city. Hamilton's commercial district during the time was characterized, by a continuing trend toward the dominance of department and chain stores over smaller retail establishments; the slowing down of building activity, coupled with the removal of some buildings to make room for parking lots; and the "modernizing" of old, historic buildings by cladding them with metallic curtain walls. Banking and financial services continued to be bulwarks of commerce in Hamilton; while older banks continued to operate successfully in buildings from an earlier era, among the few new buildings constructed was the modernist Dollar Federal Loans and Savings Association building at the South Third and High street intersection.

Even as new department stores opened in Hamilton, the older ones updated their facilities. The Sears Department store opened in an existing building on South Second Street between Court and Ludlow Streets during the mid-1940s. In 1951, the company constructed its own building at the same location at 210 South Second Street (C22), replacing the earlier one that it had earlier occupied. The two story brick and concrete modernistic building had a glass store-front at the first floor level of the concrete front façade. The store remained a Hamilton retail landmark until the 1980s. From the 1990s to the early 2000s, the building was used as office space, with the openly planned interior spaces of the department store partitioned to accommodate the new function. This building currently houses the clinic (on the first floor) and administrative spaces of the Primary Health Solutions, a healthcare cooperative in Butler County. The Robinson-Schwenn Company Store underwent major modernization starting in 1948, when a new elevator and mechanical systems were installed in the building. In 1952, building was clad with a new metal and stone façade. The façade treatment of the Robinson-Schwenn followed mid-twentieth century trend of "modernizing" nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings by cladding them in stone, metal, and glass.

Cladding old buildings with modern materials, rather replacing them or constructing new buildings appeared to have been a significant way of bringing Hamilton's downtown up-to-date in the face of competition from burgeoning suburban commercial development. In this way, the mid-twentieth century modernism popularized by architects such as Ludwig Meis van der Rohe, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, Philip Johnson, and others could be brought to bear upon older buildings. The two buildings at 245 High Street (13-C14), which housed a dry goods store Independent Order of Odd Fellows meeting hall, a saloon and other businesses during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the Reutti Building (C24) at the intersection of Court Street and Second Street were similarly clad in metal and stone (**Figure 20**). The buildings at 228, 232, and 236 High Street, that comprise the neighboring High Street Commercial Historic District, were also clad to conceal their original facades. Cumulatively, these alterations had the effect of changing the architectural character of the city's commercial district, the modernization also adding economic value to properties at a time when few new buildings were constructed within the district. Indeed, the owner of the Reutti Building described the renovation as "an expression of faith in the growth of the community and the downtown business district in particular... (*Hamilton Journal and Daily News*, January 15, 1960)."

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Apart from the Sears Store described above, other commercial buildings within the district during this time period included additions to the Journal News Building (C33) and the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell building (C23), a new Dollar Federal Savings and Loan Association Building (later, the Fifth-Third Bank Building) constructed at the intersection of High and Third Streets, and four modest buildings in the southern portion of the district. Designed by the architectural firm of Winkler, Ranck and Beeghly, Dollar Federal Savings and Loan Association building, then known as the Dollar Building (C5) at 2 South Third Street, was constructed in 1957. The financial institution for which it was named occupied the first and mezzanine floors. The upper three floors were rental office spaces, which were occupied, in 1958, by physicians and doctors, insurance agencies, and other businesses. The architects of the building also occupied an office space on the fourth floor of the building. At the time of its construction, the building was praised for its modernist aesthetic and utilitarian design (**Figure 19**). The building was transferred to the Fifth Third Bank in 1997.

In 1948, *Journal News*, by then Hamilton's only newspaper, added a modern printing press in a new addition to their existing building (C33). Constructed of concrete and glass, the rectangular modernistic building extended the newspaper property from Journal Square to the South Third Street intersection of Court Street. To accommodate the construction, one and two story retail and commercial buildings, depicted in *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, 1892, 1899, and 1927 were razed. Cincinnati and Suburban Bell building, during the 1950s, built a modernistic two story addition (C23). A nineteenth century dwelling that had been converted into an office by 1927 was demolished to make room for the addition (*Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, 1899, 1927). This addition stood adjacent to the Sears Department Store; together, they altered the streetscape of South Second Street between Court and Ludlow with their mid-twentieth century modernist architectural styles.

Other buildings constructed during this time were modest, single story types primarily used for retail. The Heib Building, 221-225 Court Street (C32), is a one story building that replaced earlier retail and commercial establishments dated back to the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These earlier establishments included a restaurant, grocery store, a shoemaker's store, and a meat shop owned by M. L. Heib and his family. Heib's meat shop was located at the older 217 Court Street building from the 1910s to the 1940s (*Williams' Directory* 1917, 1940-41). The new building was named the Heib Building likely for the owners of the meat shop, suggesting that they may have been responsible for its construction. In 1950, Kostas Restaurant was set up at the location of the Dime Bar Restaurant at 221 Court Street. Kostas Restaurant continued to operate at the new Heib Building through to the present day, making it, along with the Ohio Lunch Room located at 332 High Street, one of the two long operating restaurants in the district. A one story, mid-twentieth century modern retail based building located at 19-21 North Third Street (C17) at the corner of Market Street as the business place for Schwarz Jewelers from its construction in 1966 through to the 1980s. The building is currently home to a local pizza restaurant. A two story commercial building at 250 High Street (C6) was constructed in 1954, and has consistently been used for commercial/retail and office. It has housed a shoe store, offices of the county credit bureau, and restaurants. Since 2014, the building has been home to the High Street Café restaurant.

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Politics and Government

Hamilton has played an important, historic role in Butler County's civic, political and government history, from its early settlement in during the first decades of the nineteenth century. City and county government functions were concentrated in the city's downtown, with the commercial district home to important buildings associated with the theme of politics and government. The first court in the county was held in Hamilton in 1803. In 1809, the first Supreme Court held in the county convened in Hamilton, and one year later the town was incorporated. From its early days, lots on High Street, between the present-day Front Street and Second Street to the west and east, and Court Street and Market Street to the south and the north were set aside as the city's public square. A stone building to house a jail and jailers quarters was constructed in the public square the early 1800s. In 1816-1817, a two story tall brick courthouse was constructed in the public square north of High Street, across the street from the present day courthouse. Between 1885 and 1889, the new Butler County Courthouse, which is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, was erected to replace the old courthouse.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1887, 1892, and 1899 (**Figures 5-7**) depict the locations of other government and civic buildings in the city. The map from 1887 shows the outline of the new Butler County Courthouse that was under construction. In the same block and to the north and south of the courthouse were two county office buildings. The map indicated that the buildings were to be torn down upon the completion of the courthouse, which is borne out in later *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*. The site of the courthouse thus has the significance of being part of the city's public square – a block that has been associated with the civic functions through its history. Throughout this time, there was a County Jail located across from the courthouse on Court Street. This jail and sheriff's office stood at the location through the 1950s, after which it was removed for a parking lot. The county jail is currently located further south on Ludlow Street, outside the district boundary. The City Building was located at the intersection of Stable (Market) Street and North Water Street (North Monument Avenue), outside the district boundary, as depicted in the early *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*.

In 1920, the city hired consultant Harland Bartholomew from St. Louis, Missouri to draw up a plan for a new Civic Center that would encompass and extend the boundaries of the old public square. Bartholomew was a significant figure in the history of urban planning in the United States, and was responsible for plans for major cities throughout the nation, including comprehensive plans for St. Louis, Memphis, Newark, San Antonio, and Rochester. An important educator who had taught at the University of Illinois, Bartholomew is known for his important city planning study, *Urban Land Uses*, which was published in 1930. The plan, which exhibited all the elements of Beaux-Arts classicism, depicted monumental, classically designed civic buildings in a park-like setting on the banks of the Great Miami River, with High Street forming a central axis. Had it been followed through, the plan would have replaced the existing Butler County Courthouse building and the City Building, among other buildings (Bartholomew 1920). Bartholomew's plan for Hamilton was never realized, and the courthouse continued to serve its original purpose.

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The Great Depression took hold of Butler County and Hamilton, and during the time the construction of new commercial buildings practically halted. However, with the initiation of the Federal WPA program, the 1930s were a good decade for public-funded projects. In Hamilton, these projects included infrastructural improvements and the filling of the bed of the abandoned Miami Erie Canal for the construction of Erie Highway. Significantly, WPA funds were also used to construct new civic buildings in downtown Hamilton. The old Municipal Building at the intersection of High Street and North Monument Avenue was constructed using these funds. The construction of Hamilton's United States Post Office Building at the intersection of Court and Front streets had commenced during 1929, before the initiation of the WPA program. It was completed in 1933 using WPA funds, which included the painting of murals in the main lobby of the building.

There are four properties associated with Government and Politics within the district, of which the Butler County Courthouse is the oldest. Designed by the Toledo-based architect D.W. Gibbs, the Butler County Courthouse (C1) at 135 High Street was constructed between 1885 and 1889 at a cost of about \$304,000 to replace a Greek Revival style, brick construction courthouse building located across the street from it. In 1912, the original dome and clock tower were replaced with the existing one. Frederick Mueller was the architect for the new dome over the building. The Butler County Courthouse was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981.

The Federal Building and Post Office at 301 South Third Street (C30) was constructed in 1909 at the cost of \$122,000, primarily housing the city's post office (**Figure 14**). The post office was located at the first floor level. The second floor was occupied by the Deputy Collector of the Internal Revenue Service and a large room to conduct civil examinations. Prior to the construction of this building, Hamilton's post offices had occupied nine different locations, the first one being a room in the United Presbyterian Church on Front Street (Hamilton Journal, July 14, 1933). The post office had occupied a building at the intersection of Reily Street (Journal Square) and Court Street, across from the Journal News Building during the late nineteenth century which was vacated as the offices shifted to the Federal Building. (Hamilton Telegraph, July 8 1909). After the construction of a new Post Office in 1933, and the shifting of Federal functions to other facilities, the building housed Butler County administrative offices, including the county Board of Elections, board of education and its present function of housing the Butler County Department of Health. Construction of the new United States Post Office, at 105 Court Street (C31) was supervised by James A. Westmore, according to the cornerstone on the building. Congressional approval for the construction came only in 1930, after almost nine years of advocacy. Plans for a new post office were first drawn in when the Congress approved funds for the procurement of land and the construction of the building. The construction of the building progressed slowly, with plans continually being revised. The cornerstone was laid in 1932 and the building was completed in 1933 (*Hamilton Journal-Daily News*, June 14, 1933; **Figure 18**). The construction was funded, in part, by the Works Progress Administration, and includes WPA murals in its lobby area. The fourth building associated with government and politics is the commercial building at 110-116 South Third Street (C20) was used, in part, as the Butler County Democratic Party Headquarters through the mid-twentieth century. The building has been discussed earlier for its association with commercial activities in Hamilton.

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CRITERION C: Distinctive Design and Physical Characteristics

The Hamilton Downtown Historic District is significant under Criterion C for the distinctive design and physical characteristics of contributing buildings, representing characteristic, popular styles from their periods of construction, from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. Apart from the National Register listed buildings, those individually notable for their architectural characteristics include the Rentschler Building (6 South Second Street, C2), the First National Bank Building (300 High Street, C8, C9), the Second National Bank Building (219 High Street, C3), Journal News Building (224-234 High Street, C33), the United States Post Office (105 Court Street, C31), the Federal Building 301 South Third Street, C30), the Home Loan and Building Association building (100 South Third Street, C26), and the Dollar Building (2 South Third Street, C5). It also includes other contributing buildings that lack individual distinction but contribute to the historic character of the district as commercial types associated with the broad patterns of its history. A range of architectural styles, including Second Empire, Gothic Revival, Victorian-Italianate, Renaissance Revival, Richardsonian Romanesque, Art Deco, and Mid-twentieth century modern, are represented by buildings in the district. Even as some of the buildings have been altered over time, they retain an overall integrity of design, construction, craftsmanship, and materials, and thus the architectural styles associated with their periods of construction. The buildings put on display the styles, materials and methods of construction typical over the time period. Further, they convey the significance of the district as a commercial center that also encompassed civic, social and religious, and entertainment functions during the time period from their design and physical characteristics. Buildings and their characteristic features corresponding their periods of construction are described below. Notable local and national architects whose works are represented in the district are also discussed here.

Early Architecture ca. 1855-1887

Buildings constructed during the mid- to late-nineteenth century represent Victorian architectural styles popular during the period. Most of these buildings were associated with commercial uses, and were typically one to three stories tall with retail establishments in the lower floors and office/commercial ones at the upper floor levels. The more modest buildings constructed at the time were of wood-frame construction, while the larger buildings were primarily of brick construction, though stone was also occasionally used as material during this period. Many of the buildings, in particular the smaller ones, shared their side walls with their neighbors, distinct though each may have been in their style and construction. While the district was the commercial center of Hamilton from the early period, its mixed-use character is displayed by the range of existing building types from the period, including churches, civic buildings and, and entertainment venues. As mentioned earlier, Hamilton's downtown was also a residential neighborhood during the mid to late nineteenth century, with single dwellings filling spaces between commercial establishments. Many of the dwellings were removed during the early to mid-twentieth century for the construction of new, notable buildings – a development that changed the residential aspect of the district. Whether constructed on a modest scale or grand, buildings from this time period, with few exceptions, were either not designed by professional architects, or do not have information available on their designer. They nonetheless represent an understanding by their builders of popular architectural styles and quality construction.

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Architectural styles typical of the period include Italianate, Richardsonian Romanesque, Romanesque Revival, and Second Empire classicism.

The furniture store at 311 Ludlow Street (C35), the Trebel Building at 216 South Third Street (C28), and the commercial building at Dunkel and Fye Grocery building at 254 High Street (C7) represent the variations in style and construction of modest commercial buildings from the period. These buildings are all three story tall with street facing store-front entrances at the first floor level and office/commercial spaces at the upper floor levels. They also represent the variations in architectural character for smaller commercial buildings constructed during the period. Constructed in 1875, the furniture store building at 311 Ludlow Street is a mixed-use two story building with elements of the Italianate style. Constructed ca. 1880, the three story Dunkel and Fye Grocery building is a notable Italianate style building. The only example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture in the district, the Trebel Building, was constructed in about 1890.

Alongside these modest, though architecturally distinct contributing buildings, the period also saw the construction of buildings of a grander scale. Of particular importance are the Dixon/Globe Opera House (Robinson-Schwenn Building, 10 Journal Square, C4), the original Journal News Building (224-234 Court Street, C33), the Butler County Courthouse (135 High Street, C1) and the Front Street Presbyterian Church (19 S. Front Street, C37). While the institution had been part of the city's social history since 1810, the church itself was constructed in 1854-1855 with later, nineteenth and twentieth century modifications. Constructed in 1866, Dixon-Globe Opera/Robinson-Schwenn Building, a National Register listed property, is located at the southeast corner of High Street and Journal Square. This is a four and a half story brick building with elements of the Romanesque and Renaissance Revival styles. Located at the intersection of Court Street and Journal Square, the original Journal News building was constructed in 1887. A 1911 addition to the building, designed by local architect George Barkman, included a third floor to the original building, with a hipped roof with bays and extended cornice characteristic of an Italianate/Renaissance Revival style. The Second Empire style Butler County Courthouse (1885-1889), designed by architect D. W. Gibbs, is a significant example of civic architecture from the period. The building features a later, 1912 dome, designed by Frederick Mueller, over its central hall and stairwell.

Other contributing buildings from this era and constructed in about 1870 are the Mehas Music store buildings (245 High Street C13-C14, and the Stengel's/Reutti Building (at the intersection of Court and South Second streets, C24) at the intersection of South Second Street and Court Street that housed significant retail, social, and commercial uses. Mehas Music and the Reutti Building are currently clad with mid-twentieth century metal and stone curtain walls, and are associated with mid-twentieth century architectural trends discussed below.

The Era of Architect-Designed Buildings ca. 1890-1945

Changes in the physical appearance and shape of the district during this period were in large part the result of the efforts of both, reputed national architects who specialized in particular building types, and prominent, professionally-trained local architects. The city attracted nationally reputed

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architects, particularly from Chicago. These architects were specialists of the building types that they were chosen to design in Hamilton. Noteworthy among those represented in the district are Childs and Smith, Weary and Alford, and Rapp and Rapp. Led by architects Franck A. Childs and William Jones Smith, Childs and Smith was a major Chicago-based firm that specialized in the design of bank and education buildings. They designed several bank buildings in the Midwest during the period 1910s to 1930s, including the First National Bank, Menasha, Wisconsin (1917), Dundee State Bank, Dundee, Illinois, (1920), First National Bank, Davenport, Iowa (1923), the Security bank of Chicago (1927), and the State Bank and Trust Company Building, Evanston, Indiana (1927). The firm was also responsible for the design of several buildings in the Northwestern University Campus, Chicago and school buildings throughout Illinois and Wisconsin. Childs and Smith was the primary architect for the design of the First National Bank building at 300 High Street (C8) in Hamilton (Chicago Art Institute Digital Archives at <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/>).

Weary and Alford, was likewise a Chicago architecture firm that specialized in the design of banks and other institutional buildings. In Chicago, the firm was responsible for the designs of the Noel State Bank (1923) and Woodlawn Trust and Savings Bank (1924) (Chicago Art Institute Digital Archives at <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/>). The firm also designed buildings for the Merchant's National Bank, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (1925), and the American Commercial and Savings Bank, Davenport, Iowa (1925). While these early buildings tended to designed in the Beaux-Arts style, significant buildings designed later by Weary and Alford were in the Art Deco style, with elements of a stripped down classicism. Important among these are the thirty-three story First National Bank Building in downtown Oklahoma City, the tallest building there at the time of its construction in 1931 (Oklahoma Historical Society, <http://www.okhistory.org/>), the Kalamazoo City Hall (1931), and the Second National Bank at 219 High Street (C3) in Hamilton.

Led by brothers Cornelius W. Rapp and George Rapp, the firm of Rapp and Rapp was a leading architect of early movie palaces in the United States, and was responsible for design of over four hundred theatres throughout the nation, including several for Paramount Studios. Important buildings designed by the brothers include the Chicago Theatre (1921), the Paramount Theatre, Denver, Colorado (1930), Paramount Arts Center, Ashland, Kentucky (1931), and the 3,600 seat Paramount Theatre, New York City (1926). Buildings designed by the Rapp and Rapp, including those in Chicago, Denver, and Ashland, mentioned above are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Chicago Art Institute Digital Archives at <http://digital-libraries.saic.edu/>). Rapp and Rapp also designed the Paramount Theatre in Hamilton – a building that has since been demolished. The existing Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman's Company Men's Furnishings Store at 24 South Second Street (C19), which was constructed in association with the Paramount Theatre in 1929, was also likely designed by Rapp and Rapp.

Two Hamilton-based architects, Frederick Mueller and George Barkman, made as significant an impact on the physical character of the historic district as any of these national architects. George Barkman was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1865. He arrived in Hamilton in 1891, after completing his architecture education, to join the practice of Max Reutti, a local architect. In 1898, Barkman established an independent practice in the city, quickly becoming one of its eminent architects.

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Barkman was responsible for the design of several buildings in downtown Hamilton, including the People's Building and Loan Company on High Street (C9, now part of the First National Bank) in 1910, the addition to the Journal News Building in 1911, in collaboration with notable Dayton architects Peters, Burns, and Pretzinger, the eight story Rentschler Building at 6 South Second Street (C2), and was the local architect for the Second National Bank Building at 219 South Second Street (C3). Barkman's portfolio of work in Hamilton and Butler County included commercial buildings factories, schools, libraries, fraternal and social organization meeting halls, and residences. According to an article in Hamilton's *Evening Journal*, had a state-wide reputation for his architectural work, having "won his way into the frontline of Ohio architects by attention to details, thoroughness and a strict integrity in planning as well as superintending construction (December 20, 1911: 15)."

Born in 1873 and raised in Hamilton, Frederick Mueller had apprenticed with local architect Fred Townsend before going to Chicago to study architecture at the Armour Institute and the Art Institute of Chicago. Thereafter, he worked as an architect in Chicago for several years before returning to Hamilton to establish his practice in the city in 1901. Along with his associates Walter Hair and Ralph Hetterich, Mueller established a flourishing architectural practice in Hamilton. In the historic district, Mueller was responsible for the repurposing of the Globe Opera House for the Robinson-Schwenn Department Store (C4, 1907) and the construction of a newer dome to crown the Butler County Courthouse (C1, 1912), as well as the design of Hamilton Hotel (C21) at 118-120 South Second Street, (1907-1908), the Palace Theatre (C27) at 235 South Third Street (1920), the Home and Loan Association Building (C26) at 100 South Third Street (1923), and outside the boundary of the district, the Municipal Building, now known as the Mueller Building. Like Barkman, Mueller had designed a broad variety of buildings, ranging from commercial and industrial types to schools, to private residences and those for clubs and social organizations. Known for his involvement with the community, Mueller was on the city's local park board and had designed and directed improvements to several city parks (*Hamilton Evening Journal* 1927). Mueller's legacy survives in the present day in the form of the architectural firm of SHP Leading Design, which has evolved from the practice he had established in 1901.

As a prominent local general contracting firm, Vaughn Building Company (sometimes referred to as the Vaughn Construction Company or the F.W. Vaughn Building Company) of Hamilton made valuable contributions to the construction of buildings in the district. By the late 1920, the company was among the oldest and best established in the business in the city. The Vaughn Building Company, the general contractor for several notable buildings constructed during this time, including the First National Bank at 300 High Street (1931), People's Building and Loan Company also at 300 High Street (1910, later part of First National Bank), the Second National Bank, 210 High Street (1930), and the Home Loan and Building Association Building, 100 South Third Street (1923) (*Hamilton Evening Journal* 1923). Later, during the 1960s, the company was also the general contractor for the modernization of the Home Furnishings (Stengel's/Reutti Furniture) building at the intersection of Court and South Second Streets.

Hamilton's downtown retained its primarily commercial and retail significance during this period even as it saw some significant physical and architectural changes. Buildings for banks,

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newspapers and offices constructed on a grand scale, sometimes taking the place of commercial and residential properties that were removed in the process. These new, large, multi-storied edifices were designed by professional architects such as those discussed above. Reinforced concrete construction clad with stone and brick characterized the larger buildings constructed during this period. Beaux-Arts architecture and buildings designed in a stripped down Classical and Art Deco styles added a contemporary character to the city. This period also saw early efforts in the repurposing of old buildings; the old Globe Opera was converted to the city's first, the Robinson-Schwenn department store. Other older institutions, such as the Hamilton Journal News, saw major additions made to existing buildings as they consolidated and expanded their businesses. While building on a grand scale dominated architectural and construction activity during the period, smaller commercial and retail buildings of a more contemporary character and functions were also built, as had been through the city's history.

Many of the notable buildings constructed during this time period were designed in styles associated with Beaux Arts classicism and Second Renaissance Revival styles (practiced in the United States by architects trained in the Beaux-Arts system). The Rentschler Building (C2) at 6 South Second Street, the Hamilton Hotel (1907-1908, now Miami Manor Apartments) at 118-120 South Second Street, the Home and Building Loan Association building (1923) at 100 South Third Street and the People's Building and Loan Company (1910) now part of the First National Bank) at are notable examples of Second Renaissance Revival Buildings. The original brick and stone construction Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building (1920) at 222 South Second Street also harbors elements of the style, although that the main façade was concealed by a later addition.

As noted above, the Rentschler Building (C2) designed by George Barkman and Peters, Burns, and Pretzinger, the People's Building and Loan Company (C9) by Barkman, Hamilton Hotel (C21), designed by Frederick Mueller, and the Home and Building Loan Association (C26) building also by Mueller are also the works of significant Hamilton architects of the time. The buildings retain the character-defining materials, workmanship, and design elements, and thus their historic integrity. The Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building (C23), on the other hand, has been altered with a large addition – one which in itself is significant for its modern façade. Beaux Arts Classicism in the historic district is best represented in the United States Post Office (C31) Building, the Federal Building (C30), and the Palace Theatre (C27). All three buildings exhibit elements common to the style, including bilaterally symmetrical facades and layout, the use of classical motifs and decorative elements, grand entrances, flat or low pitched roofs, and rounded arch openings. The three buildings retain their historic architectural integrity with their Beaux-Arts style defining elements intact and visible.

Constructed in 1930 for the First National Bank and Trust Company (C8) at 300 High Street, the eight story Neo-classical building is five bays wide on each façade, is located at the northeast intersection of High and North Third streets. The four story Second National Bank (C3) building is a prominent example of Art Deco architecture in the historic district. More modest-scaled buildings constructed during this time included the Joffe Furniture (C29, ca. 1899, later, Harry Strauss Furniture) showroom and warehouse at 220-224 South Third Street – a utilitarian, five bay wide brick building with a store-front first floor and rounded arched windows marking the

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upper two stories, and a modest two story commercial building of wood construction at 315 Maple Street (C36, ca. 1899), which was to become home to an early Kroeger Grocery store and the restaurants in the twentieth century. The three and a half story Marvin Hotel (C38) at 23 South Front Street, constructed in about 1906 is a brick building with elements of the Italianate and Renaissance Revival styles, including the symmetrical front façade, rectangular double hung windows, low pitched roof with an extended, bracketed eaves.

Later resources from the period include the two story concrete building at 110-116 South Third Street (C20, 1929), the three story brick and stone construction Weubbold Building (C15) located at 9 North Third Street, and George Best and Son's Tin Shop/Ohio Lunch Room (C10), a three story brick at 332 High Street, constructed in about 1927. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows building at 309 Court Street (C34), a two story brick building with stone cladding on the front façade was constructed in 1928 as a meeting hall for the fraternal organization. The building displays elements of Second Renaissance Revival style, such as the rounded arches over the doorways of the symmetrically composed façade. The Butler County Automobile Club (C11) at 350 High Street, constructed about 1933, is a modernistic glass and concrete two story building with elements of a stripped down classicism, as seen in its fluted square columns. The Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman's Company Men's Furnishings Store (C19) at 24 South Second Street is a two story concrete and glass building with elements of the Art Deco style. The building, which was constructed in association with the now-demolished Paramount Theatre in 1929, was also likely designed by Rapp and Rapp.

Mid-twentieth century Modernism from 1945-1966

This era saw the construction of some notable mid-twentieth century modern buildings and additions. Additionally, some of the smaller retail and commercial buildings were replaced with their modern versions. After the 1970s, new building activity virtually stopped as Hamilton's industrial engine slowed down. There has been no major construction of new buildings in the district since 1992. Located at 210 South Second Street, the former Sears Department Store (C22) is a two story reinforced concrete and brick building. The asymmetrical, unadorned concrete-faced front elevation, the extensive use of glass panels at the first story levels and juxtaposition of the massive-appearing second story on the glazed first story are all elements of the modernist style. The 1948 addition to the Journal News Building (C33) was constructed about the same time as the Sears Department Store. Located at the intersection of Court and South Third streets, the addition shares common walls with the older building, is a two story mid-twentieth century modern industrial building five bays wide on both facades. The additions on either side of the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building (23) at 222 South Second Street at its intersection with Ludlow Street are of stone and concrete construction. These additions share walls with the Second Renaissance style original building, with the South Second Street addition adjoining the original main entrance of that building. The property shares its modernistic character with the former Sears Department Store located immediately to its north. Located at the southeast intersection of High and South Third Streets, the Dollar Building (C5) is a significant example of mid-twentieth century Modernism in Hamilton. The modernistic building displays elements of the Meisian style, specifically is curtain wall with aluminum framing that expresses its structural elements, its plane facades with an extensive use of glass.

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The period also witnessed the construction of modest, single story commercial retail buildings, of which three remain: the High Street Café (C6) at 250 High Street, the Heib Building (C32) at 221-225 Court Street and the former Schwarz Jewelry Store (C17) at 19-21 North Third Street are contributing resources. Constructed in 1954, the High Street Café building is notable because it emulates the modernistic vocabulary of larger buildings, such as the Sears Department Store and the Cincinnati and Southern Bell addition constructed during the same period. The Heib Building is a single story commercial/retail building constructed in 1961. The street front comprises of three retail spaces, each with its glass store-front and entrance. Entrances to the establishments, which include a restaurant and printing/graphics service, are set in recesses created by the bay front windows. It retains the functional appearance - one that emphasizes a simple geometry of recessed and projecting surfaces set in a uniformly clad wall, and is a contributing building as an example of a typical retail establishment of the mid-twentieth century modern era.

This period is also notable for the modernization of older buildings with modern finishing materials. Faced with competition from burgeoning suburbs during the post-World War II era, businesses in Hamilton's downtown took to "modernizing" existing buildings, by renovating and repurposing the interior for new uses and cladding their facades with metallic curtain walls or "slipcovers" in order to hide their historic facades and update them. Several buildings in downtown Hamilton, including at least four in the district, were covered with new materials, which effectively hid their historic facades. During a time when suburban growth was attracting business from urban cores, this veneer of modernity made older buildings look contemporary and commercially viable properties.

Four large buildings in the district, including the National Register listed Robinson-Schwenn building, were covered with corrugated steel cladding during the late-1950s and early 1960s. The cladding over the Robinson-Schwenn Building, the first of the buildings to undergo modernization, was removed in about 2000, when the alteration was less than fifty years old, revealing an original façade that had retained its historic integrity. Three multi-storied buildings in the district with modern covers remain in place. The Home Furniture Building (C24) formerly Stengel's Furniture/Reutti Building) at the corner of Court and South Second streets was covered in 1960 with a corrugated steel cladding. Designed by Hamilton architects Winkler, Ranck and Beeghly, the exterior was described, at the time, as "streamlined," a term that highlighted its contemporary modern character, and covering the facades with the exception of the entrance to the store and the display windows (*Hamilton Journal and Daily News*, January 15, 1960). The interiors of the buildings were also modernized with a gallery layout and forty room settings on display. The owner of the building described the renovation as "an expression of faith in the growth of the community and the downtown business district in particular..."

Clad in a metal slipcover of almost identical style and materials, two buildings at the intersection of High Street and South Third streets expressed a similar confidence in downtown commerce. The adjacent buildings enveloped with a single metallic slipcover house the Mehas Music store at 245 High Street (C13, C14). The two, whose original addresses were 245 and 243 High Street, share a side wall, and are enveloped in corrugated steel cladding, thus having the appearance of a

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single building. As in case of the Home Furnishings building, cladding covers the street facades of the buildings with the exception of the entrances and display windows. These buildings contribute to the district both for their association with the history of commerce, as described above, as well as a significant trend in mid-century modern architecture that had a significant impact on the physical characteristics of the district during the 1950s and early 1960s. Also during this period, a portion of the front façade of the Second National Bank and 219 High Street received a new façade, similar in its modernist character to that of the Dollar Building.

Even some more modest commercial buildings from the earlier periods were subject to modernization in mid-twentieth century. The facades of these small, one and two story retail establishments were clad with newer materials. New canopies and display windows that replaced earlier ones imbued the buildings with an updated look. Buildings on the east face of North Third Street (at 9, 11-13, and 15-17; contributing resources C15, C16, and C18 respectively) are good examples of these efforts at modernization. These three buildings were constructed between 1900 and 1927. Mid-twentieth century alterations included the construction of new storefront windows and entrances and cantilevered canopies with tie rods. These alterations had the cumulative effect of presenting a unified street front for the pedestrian, in character with the Schwarz Jewelry Store at 19-21 North Third Street, a single story building with similar stylistic features constructed in 1966. Other examples elsewhere in the district include the McComb Jewelry Store (N5) at 11 North Third Street, with a mid-century modern façade that includes a metallic clad and a storefront consisting of glazing over an exposed aggregate clad base; the lava rock clad on the west wall of the George Best and Sons (C10) building at 332 High Street. Modest as many of these alterations are, they are nonetheless significant in demonstrating the architectural changes made to the district to ensure its commercial viability through the period of significance.

The Hamilton Downtown Historic District is thus eligible for National Register Listing under Criterion A and Criterion C. The district is significant under Criterion A for its association with the pattern of events related to the history of commerce, and the history of politics/government in Hamilton from ca. 1855 to 1966. The district is significant under Criterion C for the distinctive design and physical characteristics of contributing buildings, representing popular styles from their periods of construction from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century. All but six of the forty-nine resources in the district were constructed during the period of significance. As many as 39 of the 49, or about eighty percent, of the resources in the district retain their integrity and contribute to the district. They provide a veritable narrative of the history of the district during this period of sustained growth and transformation, reflecting changing patterns of commerce, the importance of civic and government functions, and historic architectural trends.

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1983. *McBrides Map of 1836 combined with atlases of 1875 and 1895*. Whirlpool Publications, Hamilton, Ohio.

Butler County Historical Society Flat Files and Folders

Butler County and Hamilton through the Years

Contains newspaper clippings and articles by Blount, Crout, and others. Also contains Harland Bartholomew. 1920. *The City Plan of Hamilton, Ohio*. Harland Bartholomew, City Plan Engineer, St. Louis published by the Chamber of Commerce.

Hamilton area and building changes

The folder contains mostly recent material, but had a chapter on the hydraulics from Preston's dissertation.

Hamilton Biographies

Biographies of important citizens from 1791 onward through to the mid twentieth century.

Hamilton Businesses

Reference to surname file under Kelsey which provides a comprehensive look at early Hamilton economic and business practices.

Hamilton Centennial

Contains official brochure of 1891 centennial celebrations, and Jim Blount articles.

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BIZ Hamilton Businessmen/Merchants

Very useful folder on merchants of Hamilton, particularly through to the 1860s or so. Articles by Hieser and Blount as well as merchant biographies from early twentieth century or late nineteenth.

Cone, Stephen D.

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1952. *History of Hamilton, Ohio from 1850-1860*. Master of Arts thesis, Miami University, Oxford.

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Preston, Daniel.

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Rhoades, Rendell.

1959. *The Post Offices of Butler County*. Rhodopress Publications, Hamilton, Ohio.

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Schwartz, James.

1986. *Hamilton, Ohio. Its Architecture and History*. The Hamilton City Planning Department, Hamilton, Ohio.

State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio.

Varies, *Ohio Historic Inventory* forms for buildings in downtown Hamilton. State Historic Preservation Office, Columbus, Ohio (available online at Lane Public Library website).

United States Census Bureau.

Various. Census Data for Hamilton, Ohio.

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

1981. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for the Butler County Courthouse, Hamilton, Ohio (Prepared by Steed Hammond Paul Architects and Historic Hamilton). United States Department of the Interior, Washington.

1994. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for Hamilton Historic Civic Center (Prepared by Cindy Breen-Nasky). United States Department of the Interior, Washington.

2000. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for Dixon/Globe Opera House/Robinson-Schwenn Building (Prepared by Gray and Pape, Inc.). United States Department of the Interior, Washington.

2003. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for High Street Commercial Block (Prepared by Laura Previll and Diana Wellman, Sanvick Architects Inc.). United States Department of the Interior, Washington.

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Various, *Hamilton, Ohio City Directory.* Williams and Company.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Hamilton Downtown Historic District
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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property approx. 18 Acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 N | Easting:709807 | Northing:4363904 |
| 2. Zone: 16 N | Easting:710225 | Northing:4363747 |
| 3. Zone: 16 N | Easting:710108 | Northing:4363415 |
| 4. Zone: 16 N | Easting:709681 | Northing:436375 |

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

The boundary of Hamilton Downtown Historic District is depicted on **Map 1** and includes the following property addresses located on High Street, Journal Square, North Third Street, South Second Street South Third Street, Court Street, Maple Street, Ludlow Street, and South Front Street: From 135 to 245 and 246 to 358 High Street; 10 Journal Square; from 9 to 21

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N. Third Street; from 6 S. to 222 S. Second Street; from 2 to 306 and 11 to 301 S. Third Street; from 105 to 309 and 224 to 234 Court Street; 311 and 316 Ludlow Street; 315 Maple Street; and , from 19 to 111 S. Front Street.

The following Butler County, Ohio parcel numbers are included in the district:

P6421002000079	P6421003000041
P6441018000026	P6421003000036
P6441010000032	P6421006000092
P6441010000026	P6421004000013
P6421003000065	P6441018000024
P6421003000091	P6441018000042
P6441010000027	P6441018000002
P6421003000089	P6421003000074
P6441018000036	P6421003000083
P6441018000041	P6441018000035
P6441010000031	P6441018000040
P6421002000081	P6441010000076
P6441018000039	P6421003000064
P6441018000037	P6421003000076
P6421003000071	P6421003000073
P6421003000051	P6441010000023
P6421002000083	P6441010000077
P6441010000017	P6441018000001
P6421003000062	P6421003000085
P6421003000058	P6421004000025
P6421003000047	P6441010000033
P6421003000068	P6441027000002
P6421003000020	P6421003000063
P6421003000053	P6441010000029
P6421003000075	P6421003000033
P6421003000001	P6421003000049
P6421003000099	P6421003000059
P6441010000075	P6441018000027
P6421002000080	
P6421003000060	
P6421003000006	
P6441010000016	
P6421004000011	
P6441027000003	
P6421002000082	
P6421003000080	
P6441027000001	
P6421003000070	
P6441018000028	

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the historic district were selected based upon research, survey, and integrity assessment to include a high concentration of contiguous contributing properties associated with the areas of historic significance of the district. Areas in downtown outside of the district have been altered with development after the period of significance, comprise of residential neighborhoods unrelated to the areas of significance, or constitute existing historic districts. Properties to the west of the boundary between Martin Luther King Street and Third Street, such as the Municipal and County Buildings, and a fast food restaurant were constructed after the 1970s. They include large parking lots. These properties do not contribute to the significance of the district and are not included within the district boundary. To the north (across High Street) and northwest are two existing historic districts, namely the High Street Commercial Historic District and the Hamilton Civic Center Historic District. The existing districts helped define the limits of the boundary to its north. Also omitted are recently constructed buildings and single family dwellings unrelated to the areas of significance, located further north on Market Street and beyond. Areas to the south of the district comprise vacant or parking lots with isolated older buildings set too far apart from the commercial district to be included. To the south, between Front Street and the Great Miami River either, are recently constructed buildings or are already listed as contributing to the Hamilton Civic Center Historic District. These buildings are therefore also not included within the boundary. Resources within the boundary retain a high level of integrity, and best present the trajectory of history for the period and areas of significance for the district.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Samiran Chanchani
organization: HistoryWorks, LLC.
street & number: P.O. Box 8378
city or town: West Chester state: Ohio zip code: 45069
e-mail historyw@historyworks.us
telephone: 513-265-8493
date: October 1, 2015

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Name of Property: Hamilton Downtown Historic District

City or Vicinity: Hamilton

County: Butler

State: Ohio

Photographer: Samiran Chanchani

Dates Photographed: 11/03/2014; 11/10/2014; 11/11/2014

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

Note: Digital file name and number in parenthesis.

1 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_01): Looking southeast at High Street toward Rentschler Building, with Second National Bank (US Bank) Building, Robinson-Schwenn Building, and Dollar Building (Fifth Third Bank) in the background.

2 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_02): Looking southwest at High Street toward Second National Bank and Rentschler buildings, with the Butler County Courthouse in the background.

3 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_03): Looking northeast at High Street toward the High Street Commercial District, with Third Street intersection and First National bank in the background.

4 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_04): Looking southeast at High Street toward the Third Street intersection showing Ryan's Tavern, Mehas Music and the Dollar (Fifth Third Bank) buildings (within the district boundary) and the newer Butler County and City Buildings (outside the district boundary).

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5 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_05): Looking east from Journal Square at High Street streetscape showing store-front and restaurant entrances, with the restored Robinson-Schwenn Building in the foreground.

6 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_06): Looking north across Journal Square toward its High Street intersection, showing the side facades of the Robinson-Schwenn Building (right) and the Second National Bank Building (left).

7 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_07): Looking northwest at Butler County Courthouse from High Street.

8 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_08): Looking west at Butler County Courthouse from South Second Street.

9 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_09): Looking east from South Second Street at Rentschler Building, west façade.

10 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_10): Looking north from parking lot at Rentschler Building, rear façade.

11 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_11): Looking southwest from High Street at Second National Bank, front façade.

12 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_12): Looking northwest from Journal Square vicinity at Second National Bank rear and west facades.

13 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_13): Looking southwest from High Street at Second National Bank entrance doorway detail.

14 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_14): Looking southeast from High Street at Robinson-Schwenn Building.

15 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_15): Looking northeast Journal Square at the side façade with later addition, of Robinson-Schwenn Building.

16 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_16): Looking southeast at Dollar (Fifth Third bank) Building.

17 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_17): Looking east at Dollar (Fifth Third Bank) Building.

18 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_18): Looking northeast toward High Street Café Building (250 High Street).

19 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_19): Looking northwest from High Street toward Sara's Gift Shop Building (254 High Street) on North Third Street intersection.

20 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_20): Looking northeast toward First National Bank (First Financial Bank) buildings at the intersection of North Third and High streets, with the Ohio Lunch Room building in the background.

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21 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_21): Looking northwest from High Street towards former People's Building and Loan Company Building (later, part of First National and First Financial Banks).

22 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_22): Looking north towards main, High Street façade of First National Bank building

23 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_23): Looking northeast from High Street at Ohio Lunch Room Building main façade.

24 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_24): Looking northeast from High Street at former Butler County Bureau of Motor Vehicles (Max's Flower Shop Building).

25 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_25): Looking south from Market Street towards the rear facades of the First National Bank (First Financial Bank) buildings and the Ohio Lunch Room Building.

26 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_26): Looking southwest from Martin Luther King Boulevard vicinity at the Statue of Hebe, with High Street in the background.

27 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_27): Looking south from High Street towards Mehas Music and Ryan's Tavern.

28 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_28): Looking southwest at Hamilton Downtown Historic District buildings on the west face of North Third Street, from its intersection with Market Street.

29 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_29): Looking west from North Third Street at 9 South Third Street building.

30 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_30): Looking southwest from North Third Street at Weubbold Building.

31 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_31): Looking west from North Third Street at the former Schwarz Jewelry Store, 19-21 North Third Street.

32 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_32): Looking northwest from North Third Street at Zettler Building.

33 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_33): Looking northeast at South Second Street from the vicinity of the former Hamilton Hotel (Miami Manor Apartments).

34 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_34): Looking northeast at South Second Street from its intersection with Ludlow Street.

35 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_35): Looking northeast at the former Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company Men's Furnishing Store from the Court and South Second Street intersection.

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- 36 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_36): Looking east toward 110-116 South Second Street Building, across from South Second Street.
- 37 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_37): Looking east-northeast from South Second Street at the former Hamilton Hotel (Miami Manor Apartments).
- 38 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_38): Looking southeast from South Second and Court Street intersection at 110-116 South Second Street and the former Hamilton Hotel (Miami Manor Apartments).
- 39 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_39): Looking southeast from South Second Street at former Sears Department Store (Primary Health Solutions).
- 40 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_40): Looking southeast from the South Second and Ludlow Street intersections at the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building.
- 41 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_41): Looking northwest from Ludlow Street at the Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Building.
- 42 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_42): Looking southwest at the Home Furnishings building from the Court and South Second street intersection.
- 43 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_43): Looking southwest at South Third Street, showing the Mehas Music building in the foreground and the Journal News Building in the background.
- 44 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_44): Looking northeast at South Third Street, showing the single bay Dunlap Building in the foreground and the Dollar (Fifth Third bank) building in the background.
- 45 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_45): Looking south at South Third Street from the vicinity of its Court Street intersection
- 46 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_46): Looking north at South Third Street from its Ludlow Street intersection
- 47 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_47): Looking east from South Third Street at the 20 South Third Street building
- 48 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_48): Looking southeast from Court Street at Home Loan and Building Association/Chaco Credit Union Building
- 49 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_49): Looking southwest from Court Street at Home Loan and Building Association/Chaco Credit Union Building
- 50 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_50): Looking southwest at Palace Theatre and former Ringel's Furniture store from South Third Street.
- 51 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_51): Looking southeast at Trebel Building from South Third and Maple Street intersection.

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52 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_52): Looking east from South Third Street at Trebel Building, wall detail.

53 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_53): Looking northeast at Joffe Furniture Building and Trebel Building from South Third and Ludlow street intersection.

54 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_54): Looking southwest at Federal Building from Ludlow Street.

55 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_55): Looking west from South Third Street at former McComb Jewelry Store, 11 South Third Street

56 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_56): Looking southeast at 306 South Third Street from South Third and Ludlow street intersection.

57 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_57): Looking west on Court Street toward South Front Street, with the Butler Country Courthouse to the right and the United States Post Office in the background to the left.

58 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_58): Looking east on Court Street from the vicinity of Journal Square.

59 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_59): Looking northwest towards the rear facades of Rentschler Building and Second National Bank Building from Court Street.

60 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_60): Looking west on Court Street from the vicinity of its intersection with South Third Street.

61 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_61): Looking west on Court Street from the east of its intersection with South Third Street.

62 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_62): Looking southeast from the Court and South Front streets intersection toward United States Post Office Building.

63 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_63): Looking northeast from South Front Street toward United States Post Office Building.

64 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_64): Looking west, interior detail of WPA era mural in the United States Post Office lobby.

65 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_65): Looking southeast on Court Street at Heib Building.

66 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_66): Looking northeast on Court Street at Journal News Building.

67 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_67): Looking southwest on Ludlow Street toward 311 Ludlow Street building.

68 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_68): Looking west on Maple Street.

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69 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_69): Looking southwest toward 315 Maple Street building.

70 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_70): Looking southwest at South Front Street from its intersection with High Street.

71 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_71): Looking west-southwest at Front Street Presbyterian Church on South Front Street.

72 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_72): Looking northwest at former Marvin Hotel (Presby House) on South Front Street.

73 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_73): Looking southwest at St. Mary's Church of God on South Front Street.

74 of 74 (OH_Butler County_Hamilton Downtown Historic District_74): Looking northeast at 26 South Third Street from the intersection of Court and South Third streets.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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National Park Service

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Figure 1: Location of the site of Fort Hamilton overlaid on the street pattern, ca. 1882 (Source: *A History and Biographical Cyclopaedia of Butler County, Ohio, 1882*)

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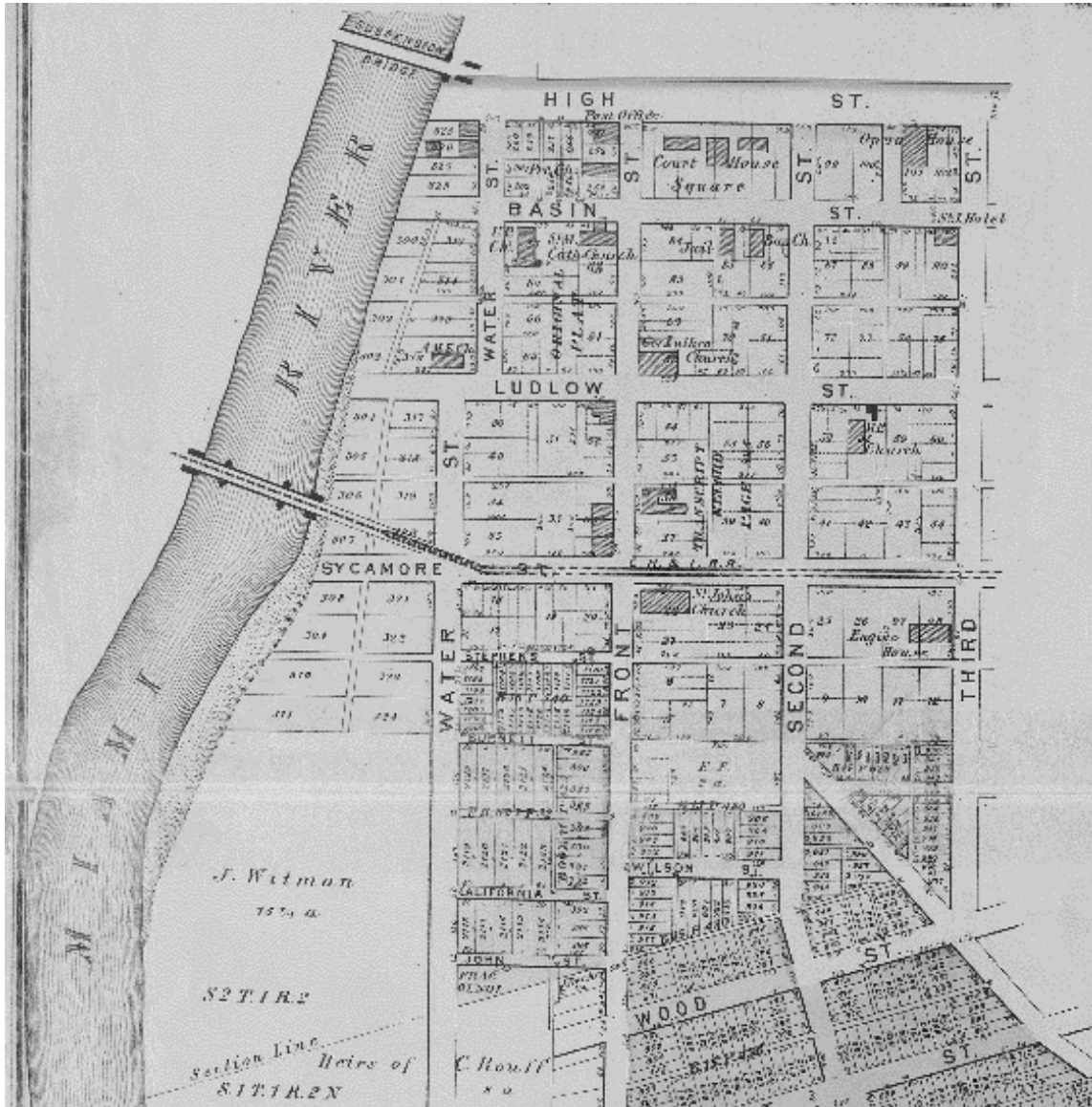


Figure 2: Second Ward, Hamilton, comprising part of original plat of Hamilton, and portion of the Historic District North of High Street to the west face of Third Street (Source: *Combination Atlas of Hamilton, 1875*)

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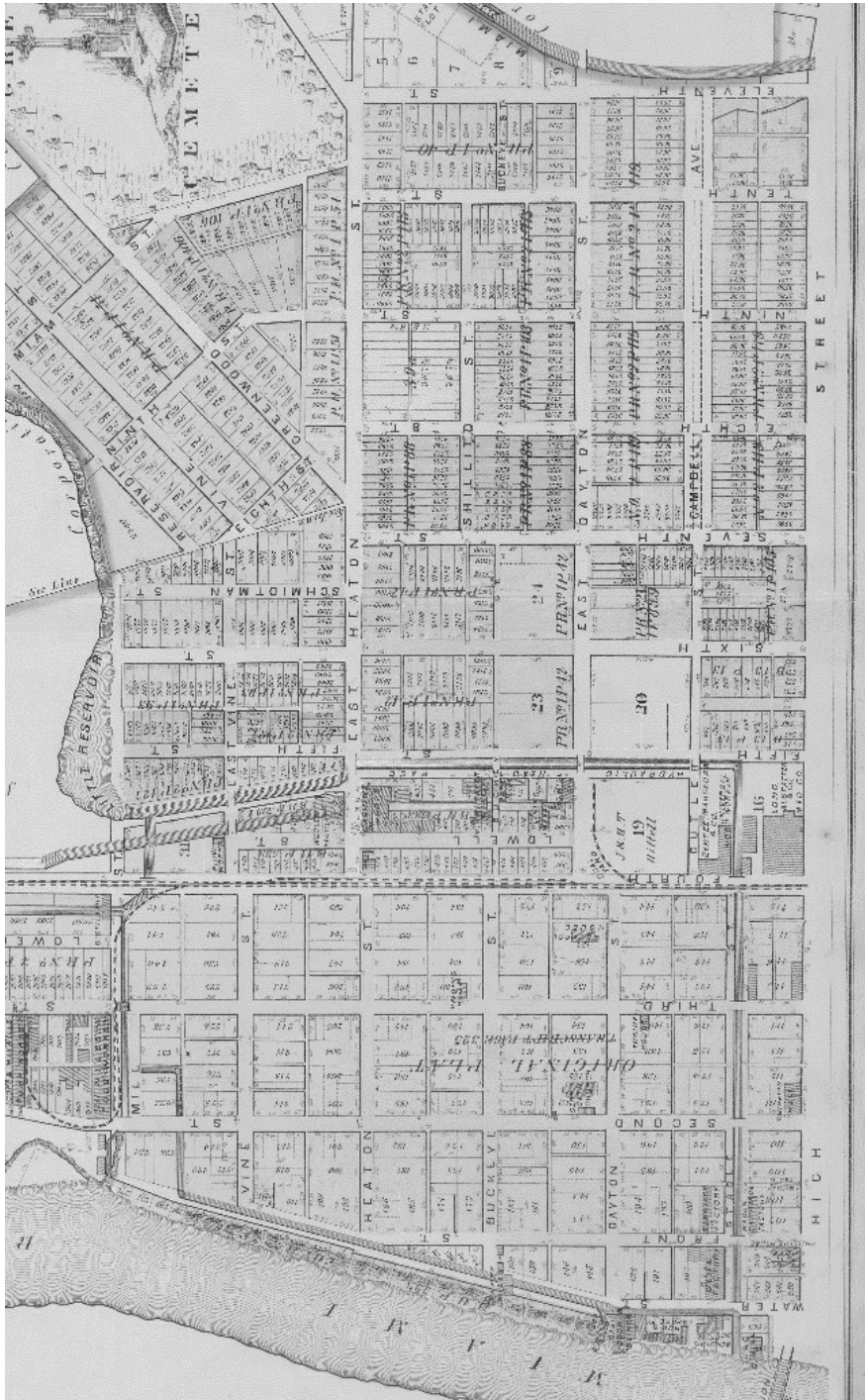


Figure 3: Third Ward, Hamilton, comprising part of original plat of Hamilton, and portion of the Historic District North of High Street to the west face of Third Street. The 1875 map also shows the location of the hydraulic race, the reservoir, and the railroad lines in the city. (Source: *Combination Atlas of Hamilton, 1875*)

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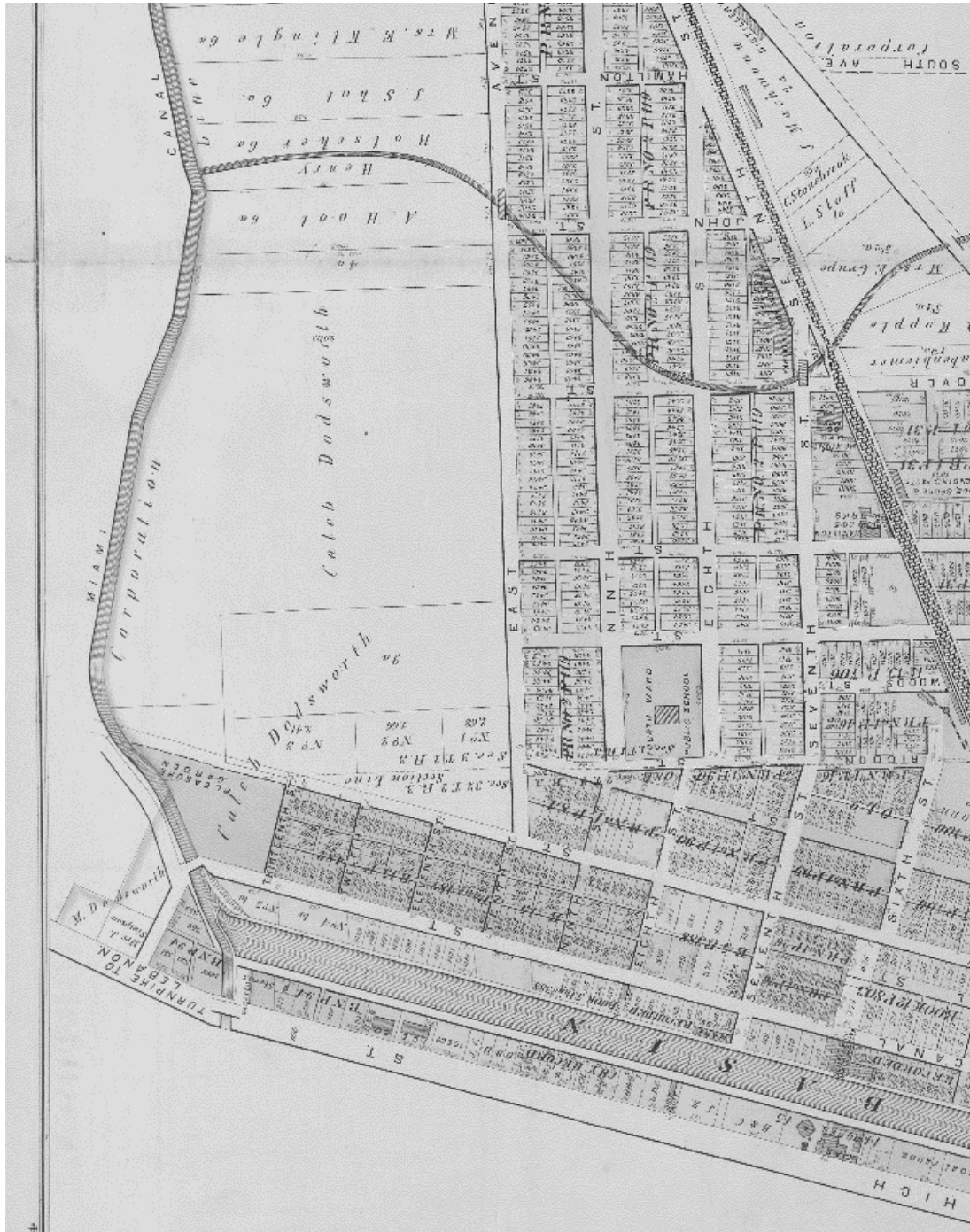


Figure 4: Fourth Ward, Hamilton showing the coation of the Canal Basin, 1875 (Source: *Combination Atlas of Hamilton, 1875*)

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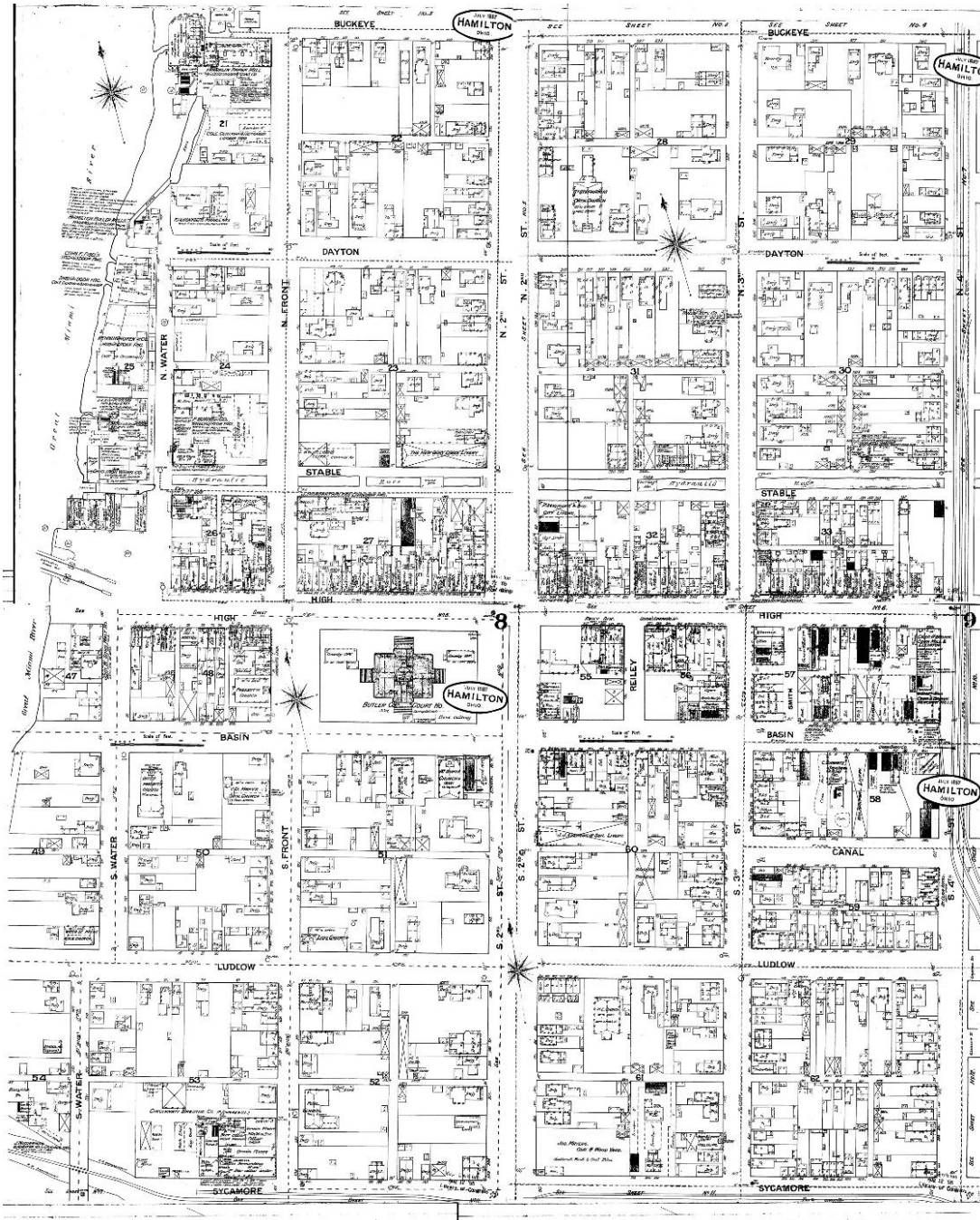


Figure 5: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of HAMILTON, 1887 (Composite) showing the Downtown Hamilton Historic District and its vicinity.

United States Department of the Interior
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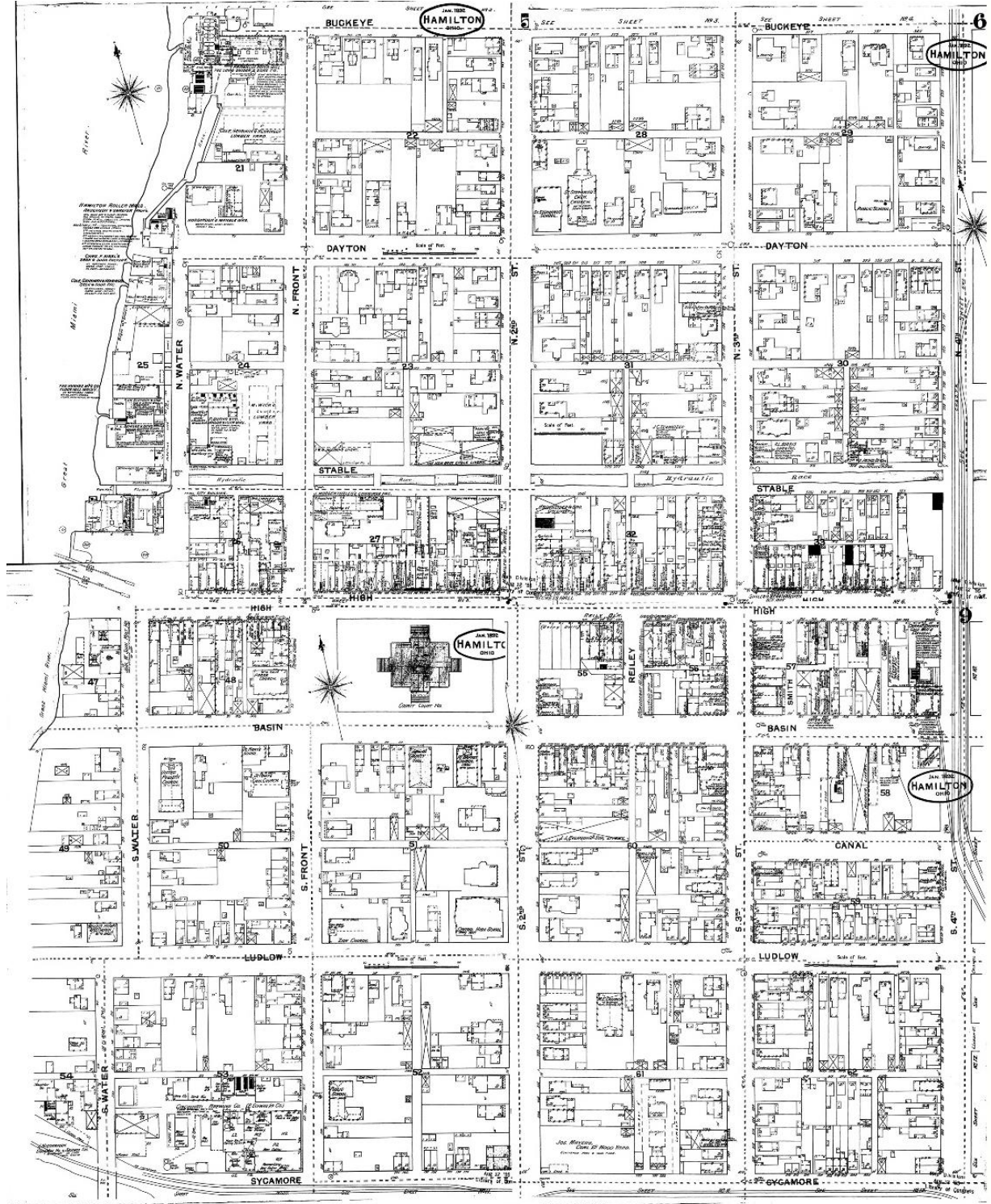


Figure 6: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Hamilton, 1892 (Composite) showing the Downtown Hamilton Historic District and its vicinity.

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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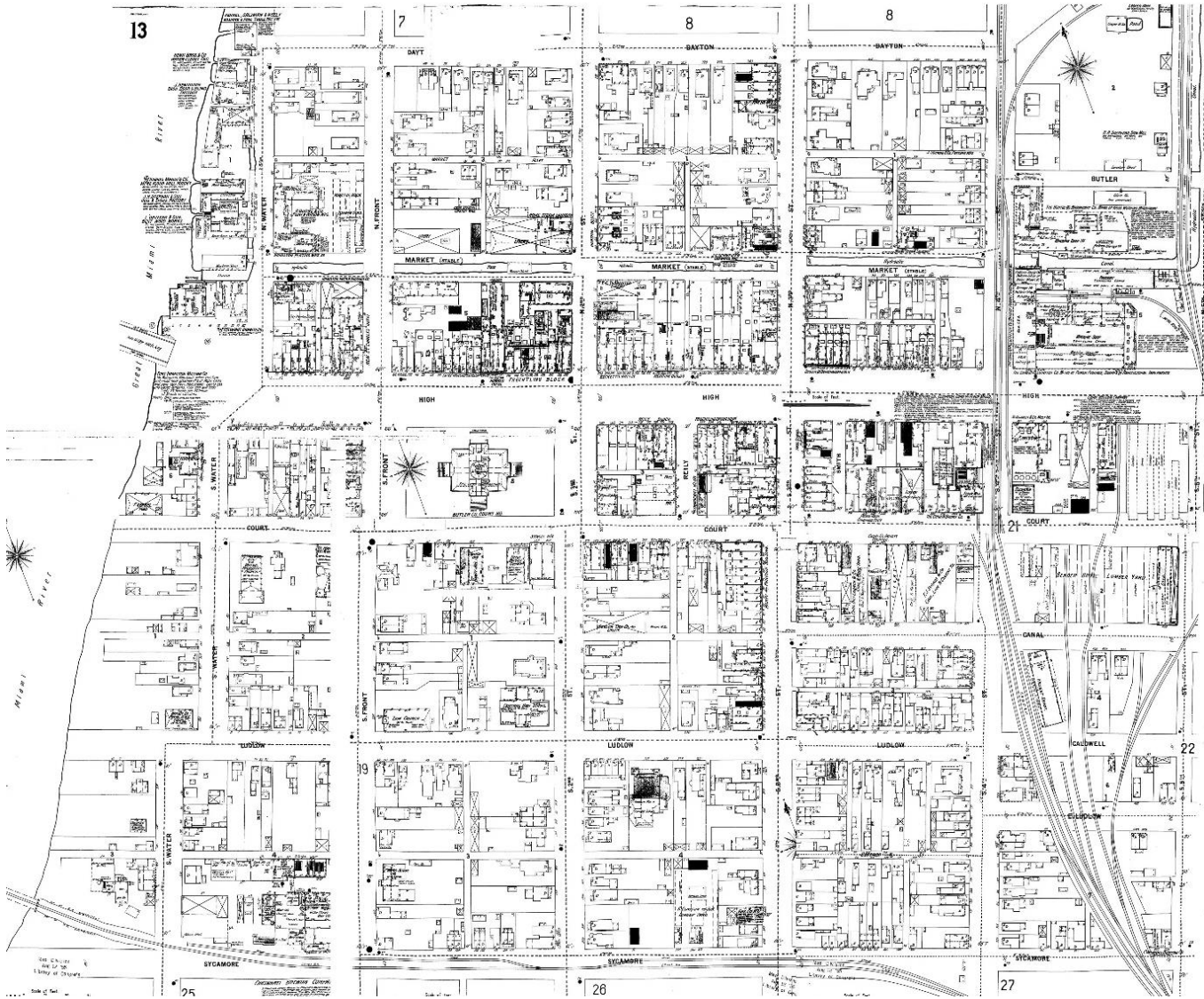


Figure 7: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Hamilton, 1899 (Composite) showing the Downtown Hamilton Historic District and its vicinity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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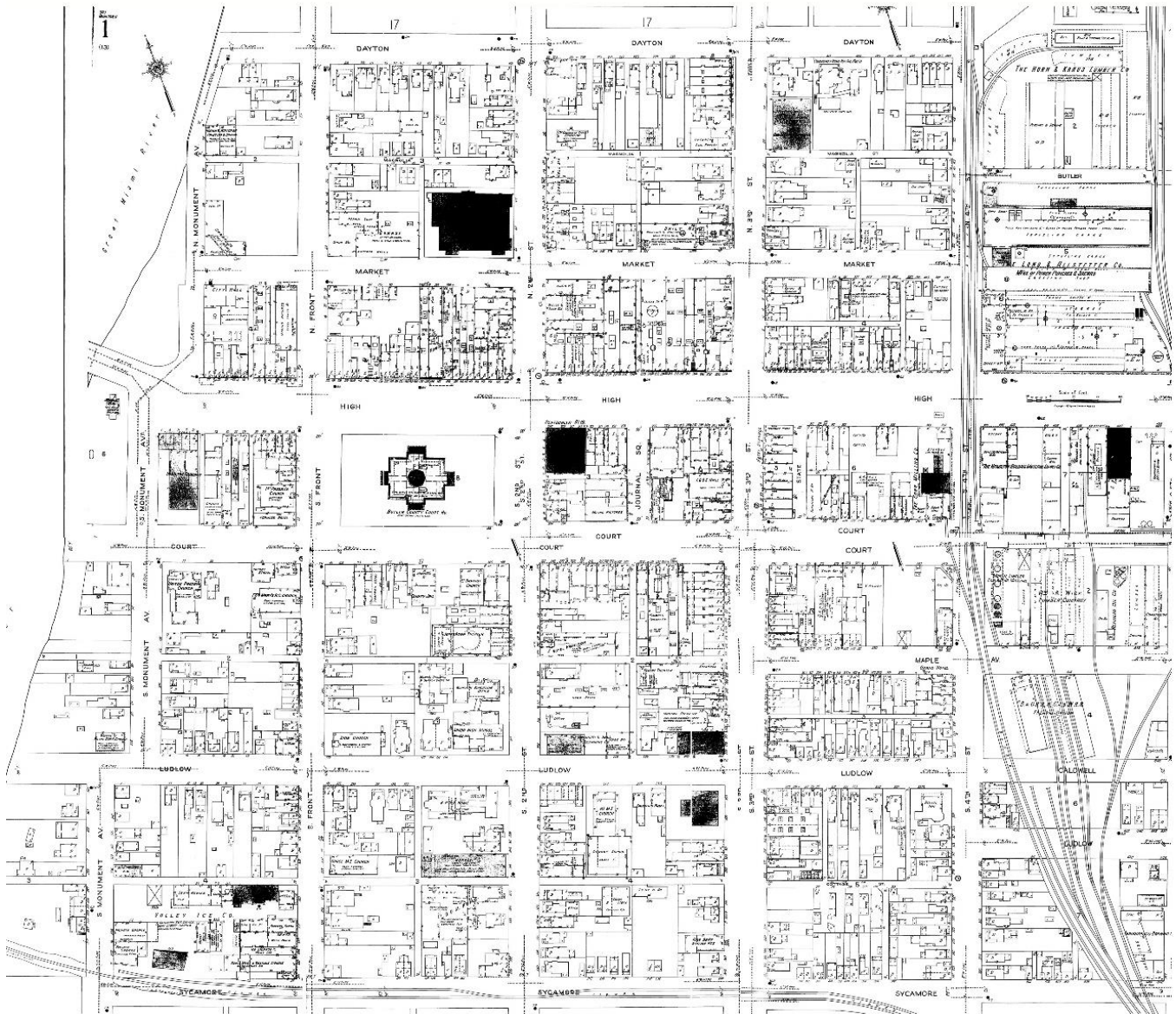


Figure 8: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Hamilton, 1927 (Composite) showing the Downtown Hamilton Historic District and its vicinity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
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N/A
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Figure 9: An 1898 photograph of High Street showing the block between the present-day Journal Square (Reily Street) and South Third Street, looking southwest from the Third Street intersection. The photograph shows the two buildings at 241 and 245 High Street (now Mehas Music), 241-237 High Street (now Ryan’s Tavern) and the Dixon-Globe Opera Building as they appeared at the time.

United States Department of the Interior
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Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Butler County, Ohio

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N/A

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Figure 10: Great Flood of 1913 photograph showing the High Street-North Third Street intersection. The Dreyfus Brothers Store at 254 High Street (present day Sara's Gift and Décor Shop) is located to the left. The building on the right was replaced by one of its tenants with the First National Bank and Trust Company building.

United States Department of the Interior
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Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Butler County, Ohio

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N/A

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Figure 11: A photograph depicting High Street, looking southeast from near its intersection with Second Street. The Rentschler Building, Reily Block (replaced in 1930 by the Second National Bank Building), and the Robinson-Schwenn building shown in the photograph.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
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N/A
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Figure 12: High Street looking west during the Great Flood of 1913 from its intersection with Third Street, with a view of the Robinson-Schwenn Building, Reily Block, and Rentschler Building.

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Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio

County and State
N/A

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Section number Additional Documents Page 13

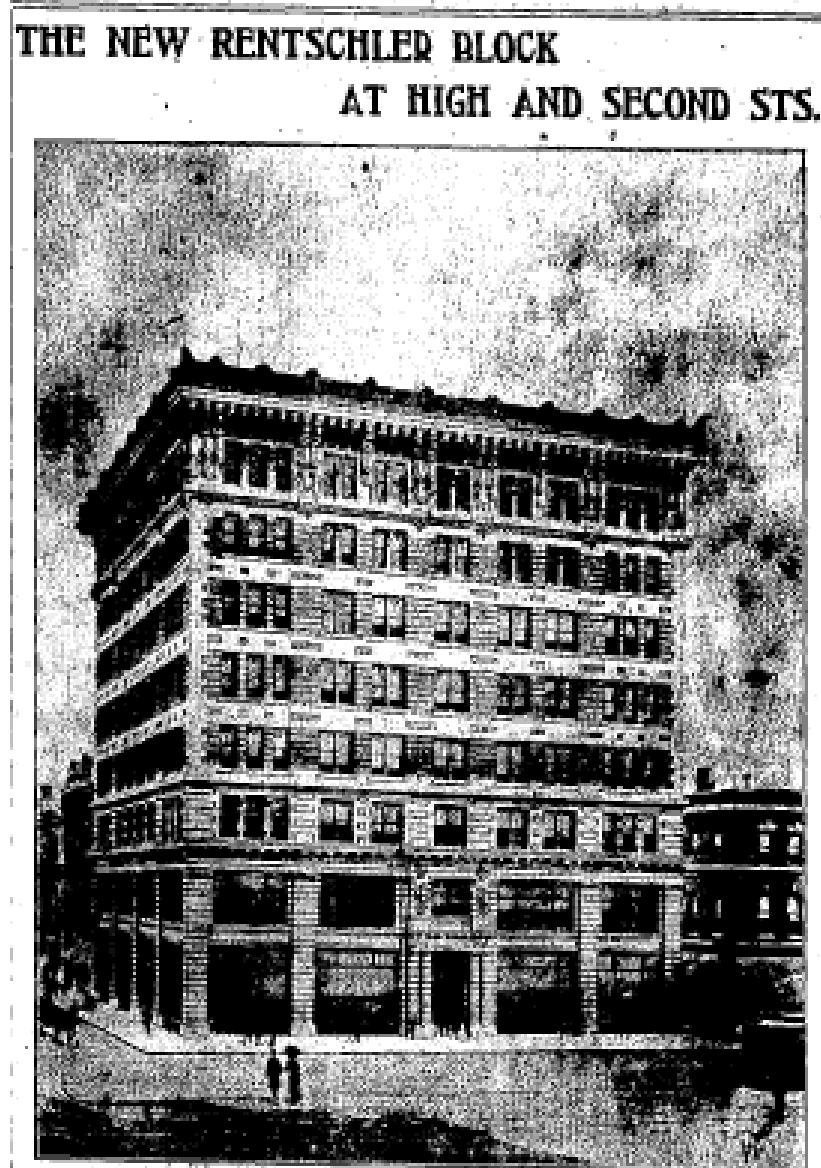


Figure 13: Rentschler Building 6 South Second Street, as depicted in an article in the *Butler County Democrat*, 1905.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

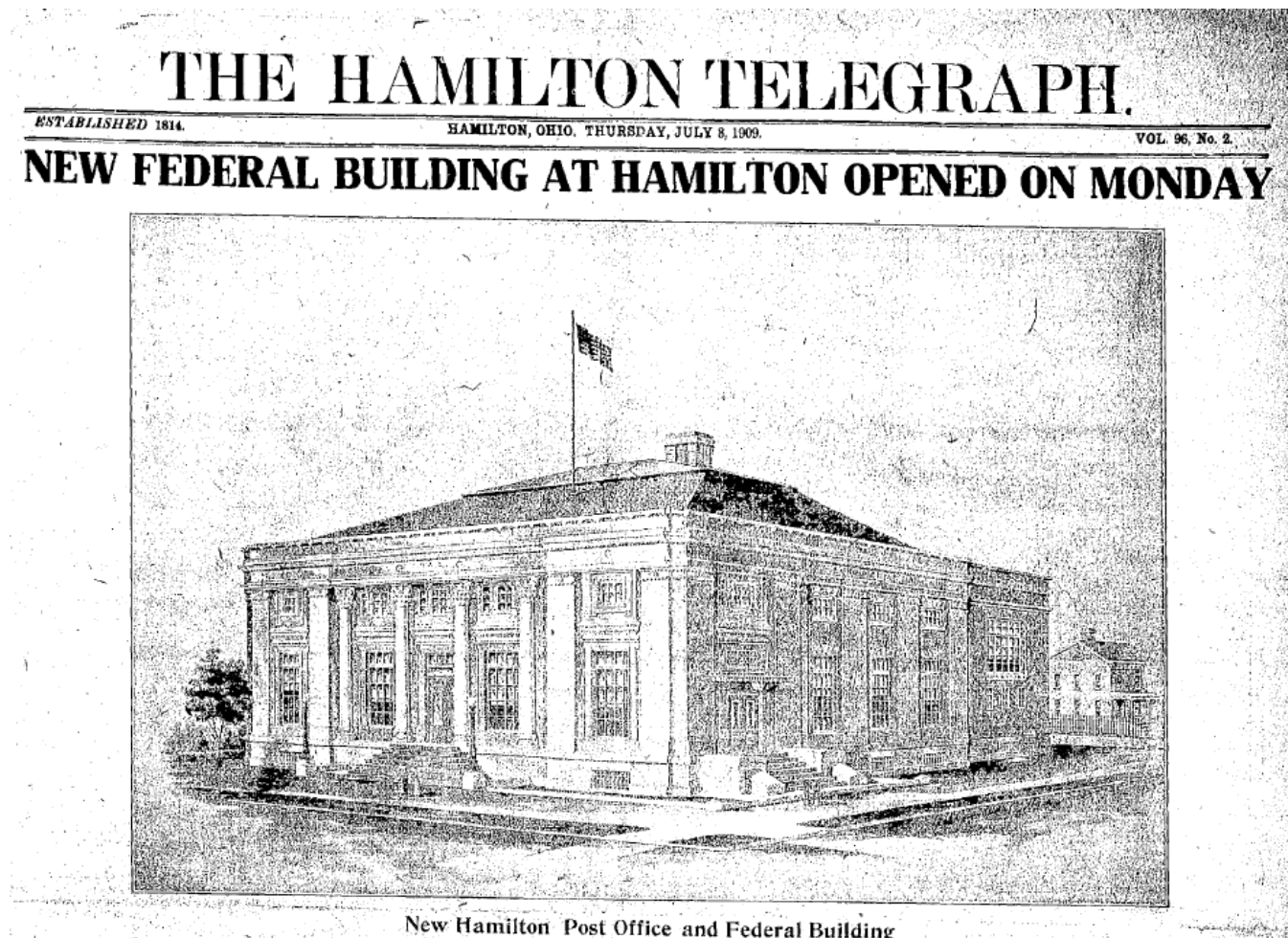
Butler County, Ohio

County and State

N/A

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New Hamilton Post Office and Federal Building

Figure 14: The Federal Building, 301 South Third Street, as depicted in an article in *The Hamilton Telegraph*, 1909.

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Hamilton Downtown Historic District

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Butler County, Ohio

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N/A

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THE NEW \$100,000 HOME



The American flag today proudly floats over this handsome new home of The Hamilton Home Loan and Building Association.

The dedication was appropriately made by former Governor James E. Campbell, who was the first attorney of the Association and the only living member of the first officers.

The Home Loan and Building Association was started in 1878. It is the oldest and largest building association in Hamilton. Its capital is ten million dollars. Its assets are two and a half million dollars.

The 50th anniversary of the Home Loan and Building Association is happily observed in the dedication of this new business home at Third and Court streets. The building cost \$100,000.

This new home of the Home Loan and Building Association is in full keeping with its splendid traditions and history. The building, equipment and furnishings is one of the finest in the central west, and is a great credit to the association and to Hamilton.

Figure 15: The Home Loan and Building Association, 100 South Third Street building as depicted in an article in *The Hamilton Journal*, 1923.

United States Department of the Interior
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Figure 16: The Second National Bank Building, 219 High Street, as depicted in an article in the *Hamilton Evening Journal*, 1931.

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Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Butler County, Ohio

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N/A

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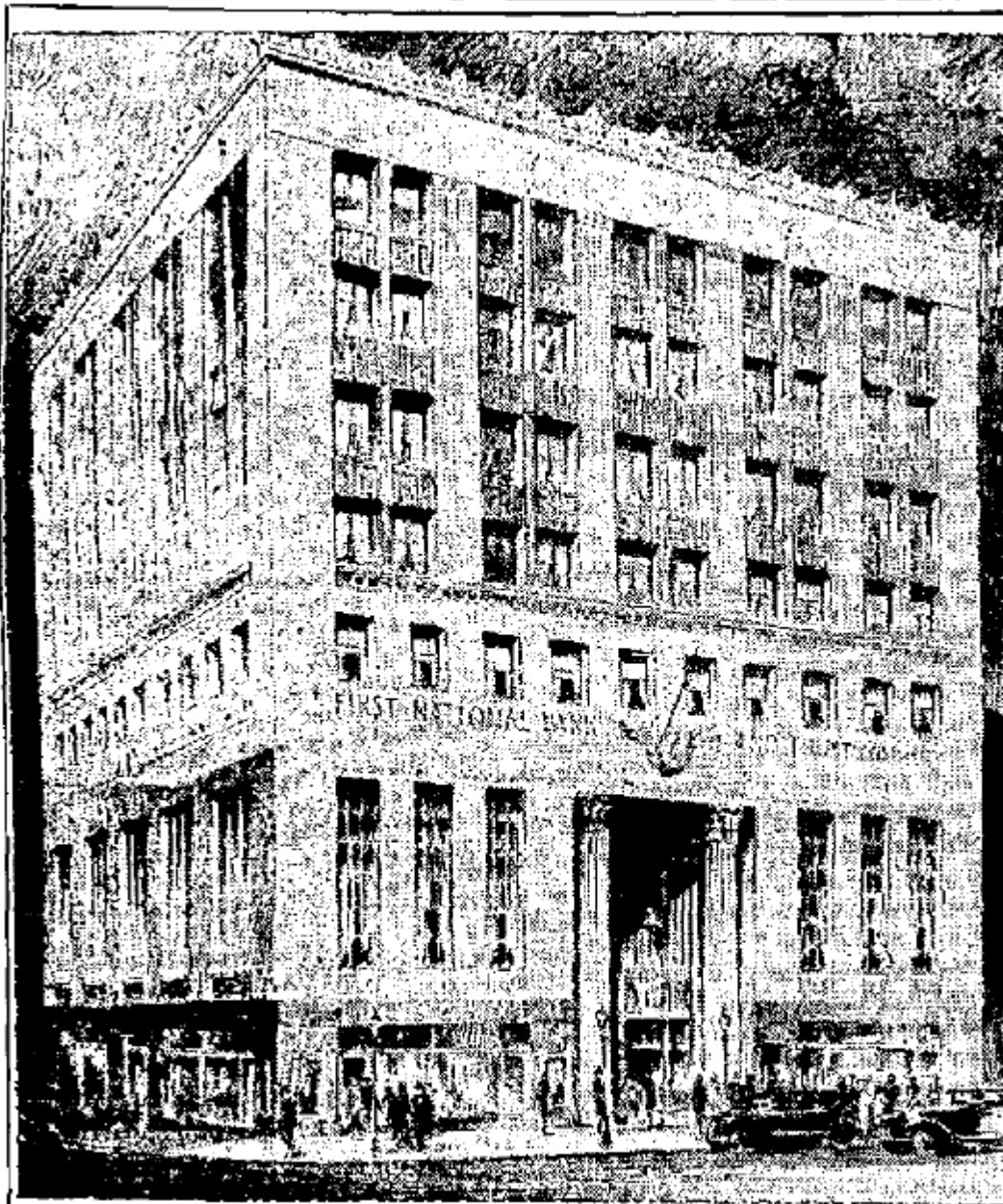


Figure 17: First National Bank and Trust Company, 300 High Street, as depicted in the *Hamilton Daily News*, 1930.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Hamilton Downtown Historic District
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Butler County, Ohio
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HAMILTON'S NEW POSTOFFICE

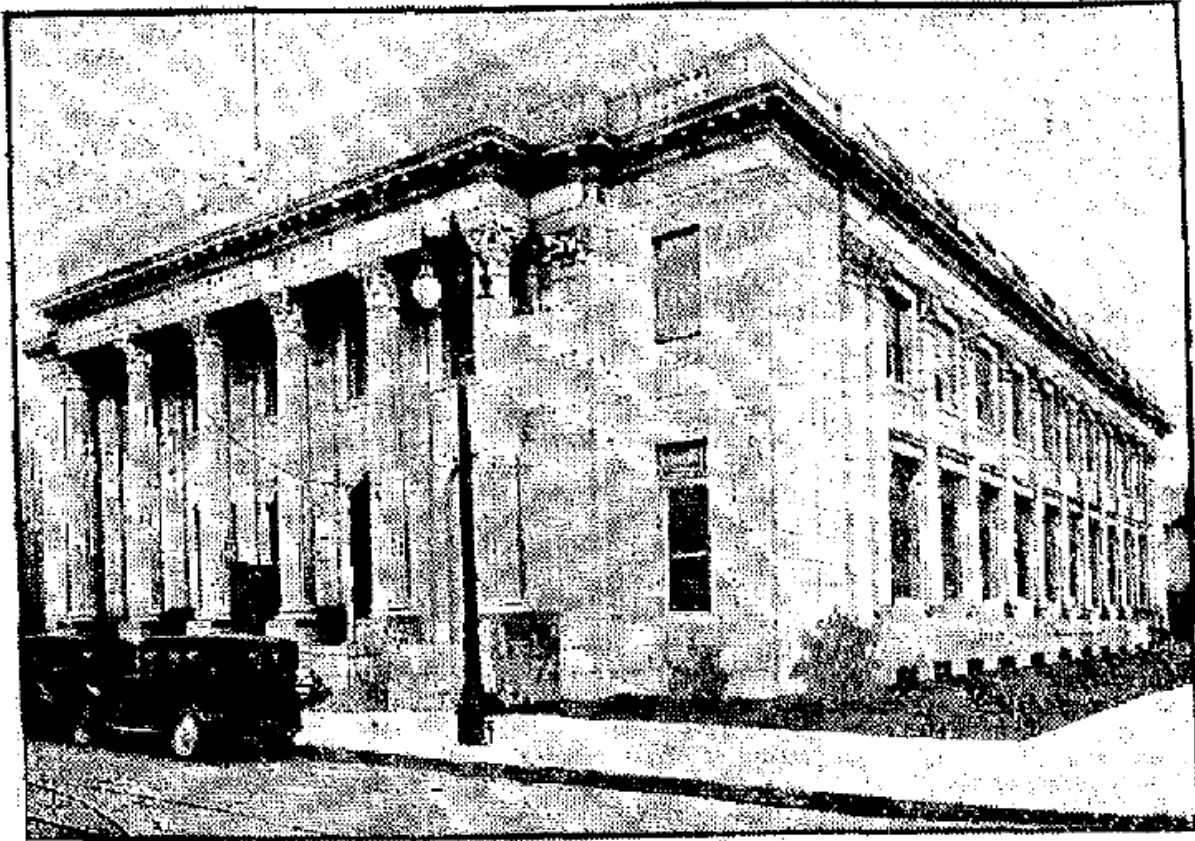


Figure 18: The United States Post Office Building, 105 Court Street, as depicted in *The Hamilton Journal*, 1933.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

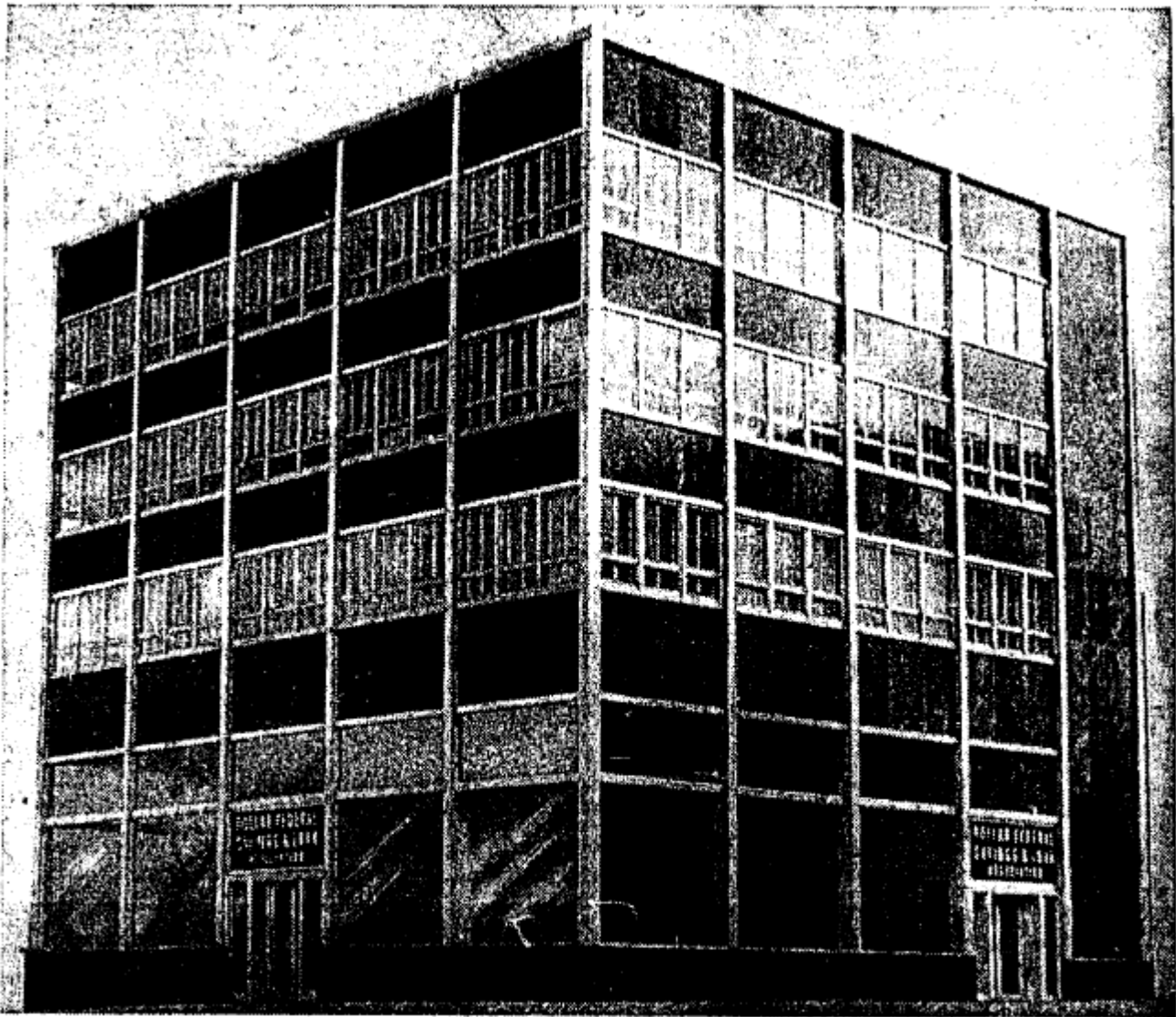
Butler County, Ohio

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documents Page 19



The new Dollar Federal Savings and Loan Association Building at Third and High Sts. is pictured. The formal opening is to be held Saturday.

Figure 19: The Dollar Building at the intersection of Third and High Street as shown in an article in the *Hamilton Journal and Daily News*, 1958.

United States Department of the Interior
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Hamilton Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
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Home Furniture To Remodel Exterior In New Downtown Hamilton Project

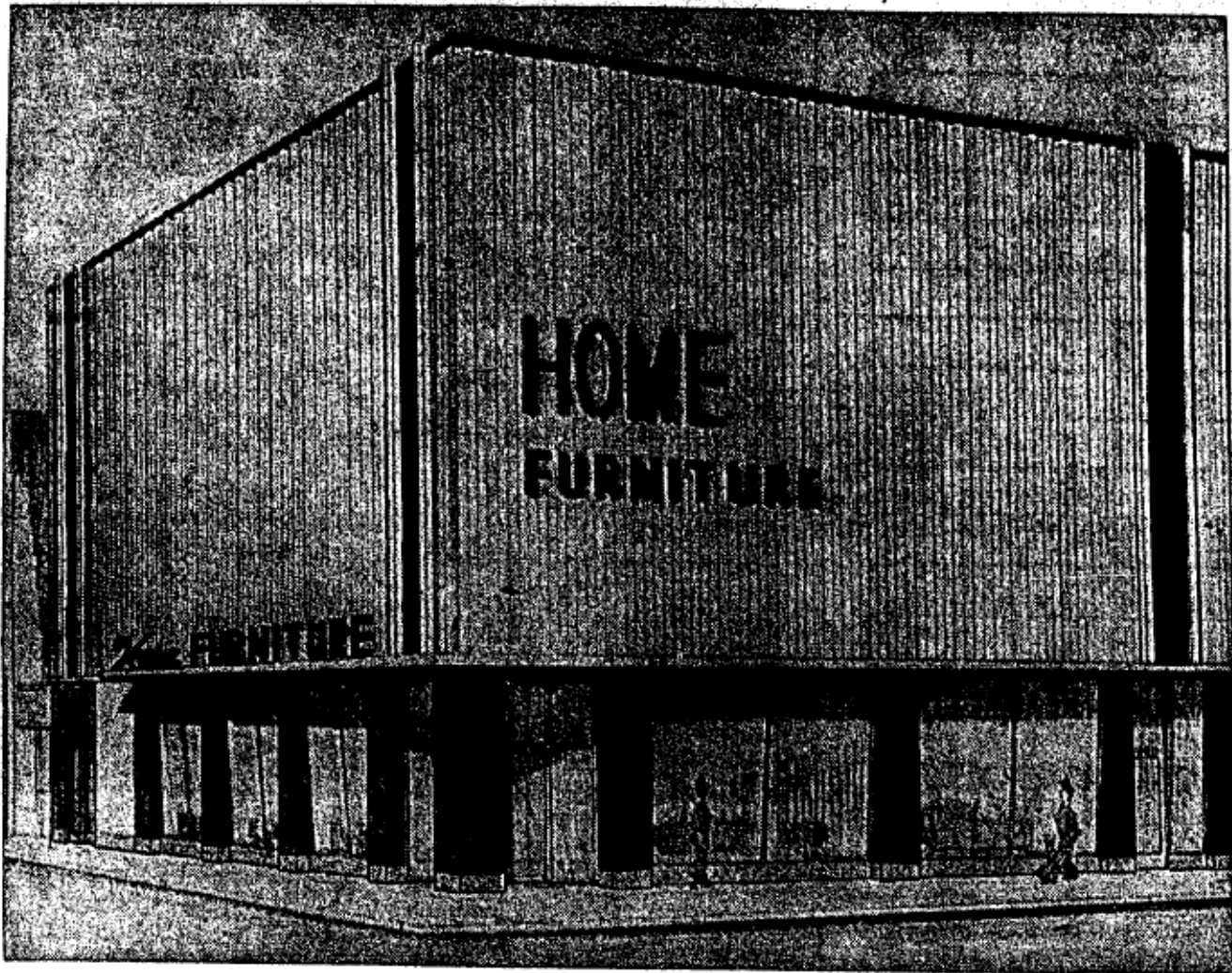


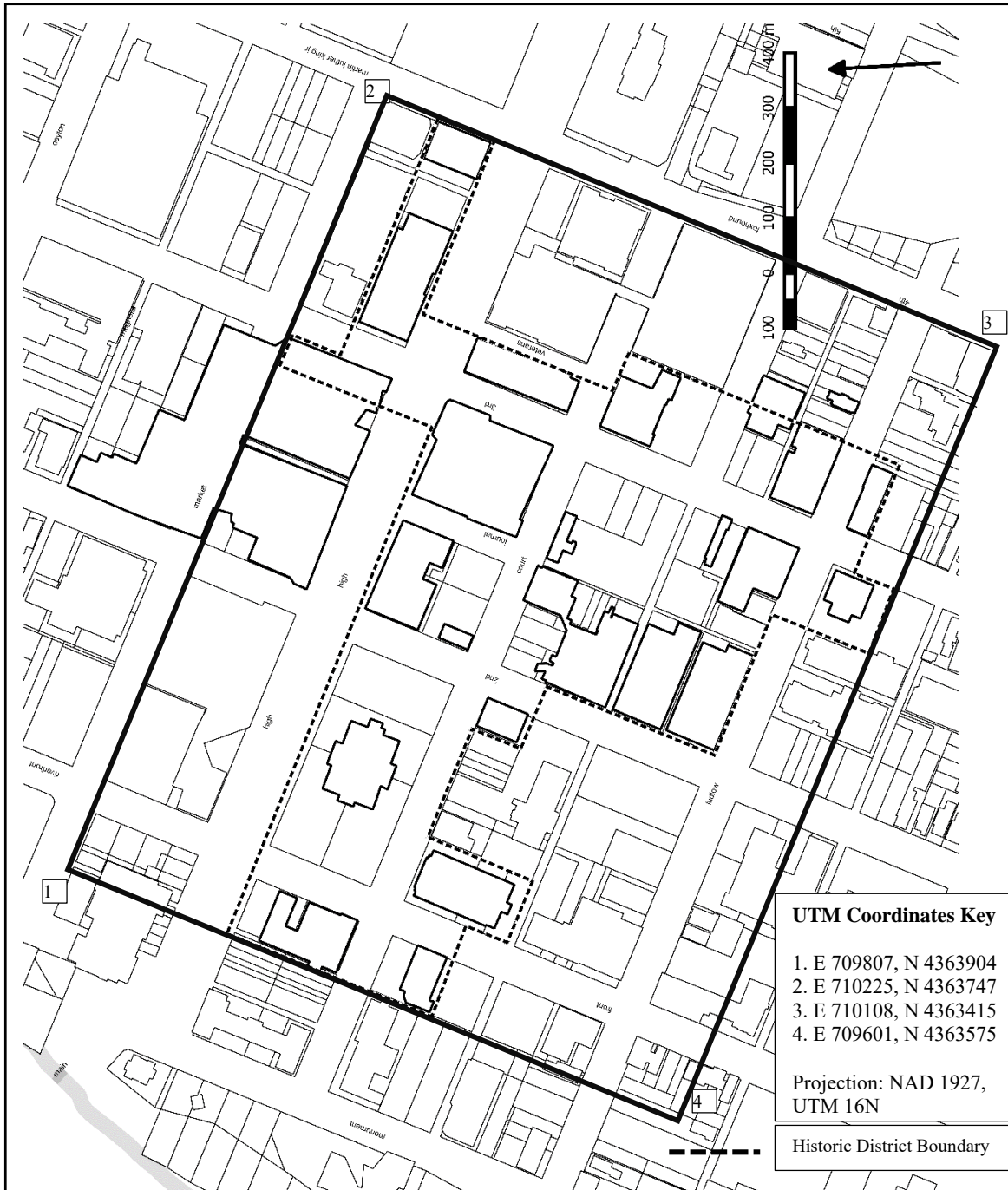
Figure 20: An architectural rendering of the exterior modernization of the Home Furniture Building (former Stengel's Furniture/Reutti Building) at Court and South Second street intersection as depicted in the *Hamilton Journal and Daily News*, 1960.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Hamilton Downtown Historic District
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Butler County, Ohio
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N/A
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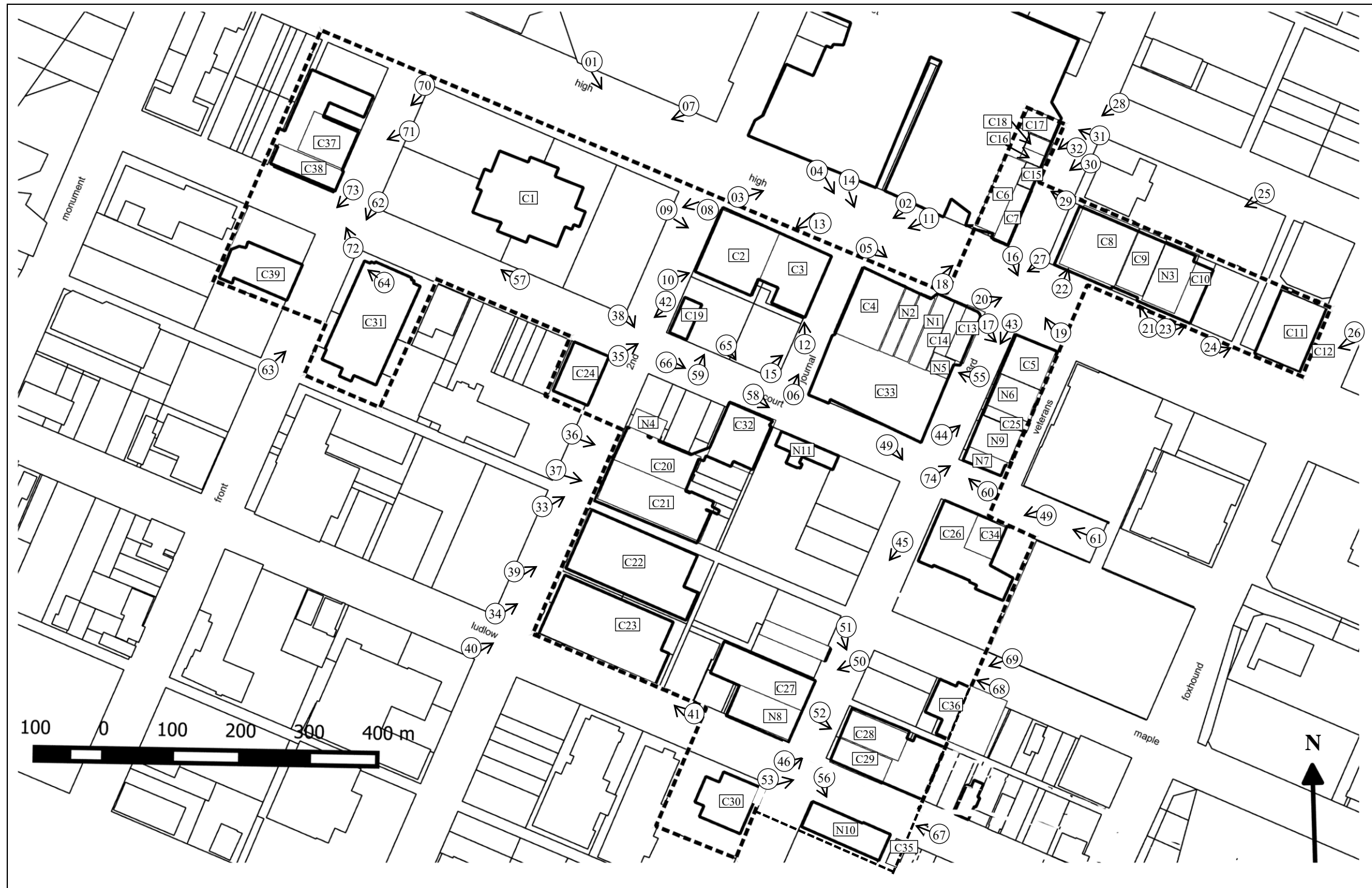
Map 1: Hamilton Downtown Historic District Boundary Map (Source for Data: *Butler County Engineer's Office*). Nos. 1-4 indicate the UTM coordinates of the boundary as identified and listed in Section 10, Geographic Data, of NRHP Nomination Form.

United States Department of the Interior
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Hamilton Downtown Historic District
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Legend

- Historic District Boundary
- C33 Contributing Resource
- N3 Non-Contributing Resource
- 25 Photograph Location and Direction

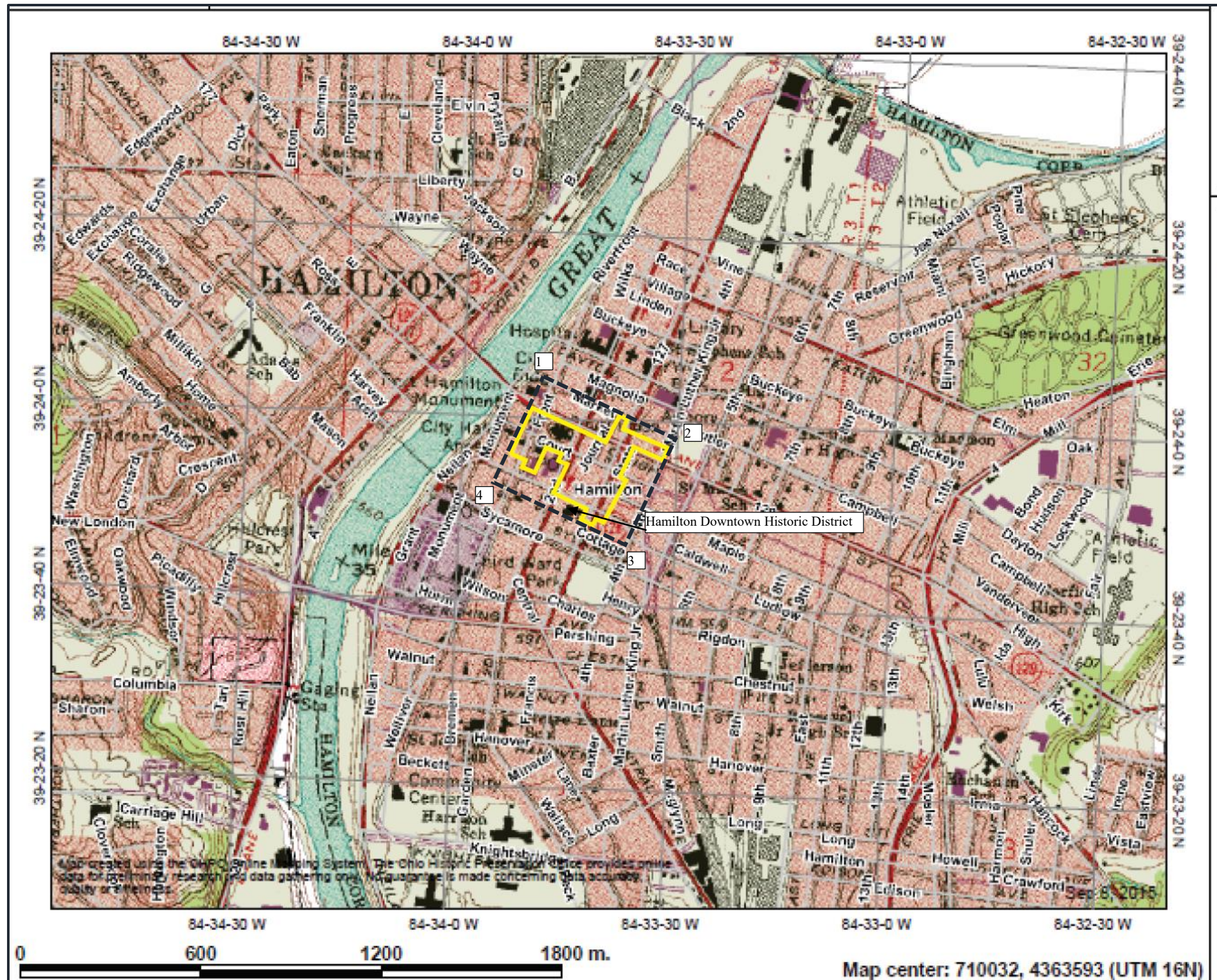
Map 2: Hamilton Downtown Historic District map showing the district boundary, contributing and non-contributing resources, and photograph locations and directions.

United States Department of the Interior
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Hamilton Downtown Historic District
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UTM Coordinates Key

1. E 709807, N 4363904
2. E 710225, N 4363747
3. E 710108, N 4363415
4. E 709601, N 4363575

Projection: NAD 1927
UTM 16N

Map 3: Hamilton Downtown Historic District Map showing coordinate locations (Source of USGS Topographical Map – Ohio Historic Preservation Office).

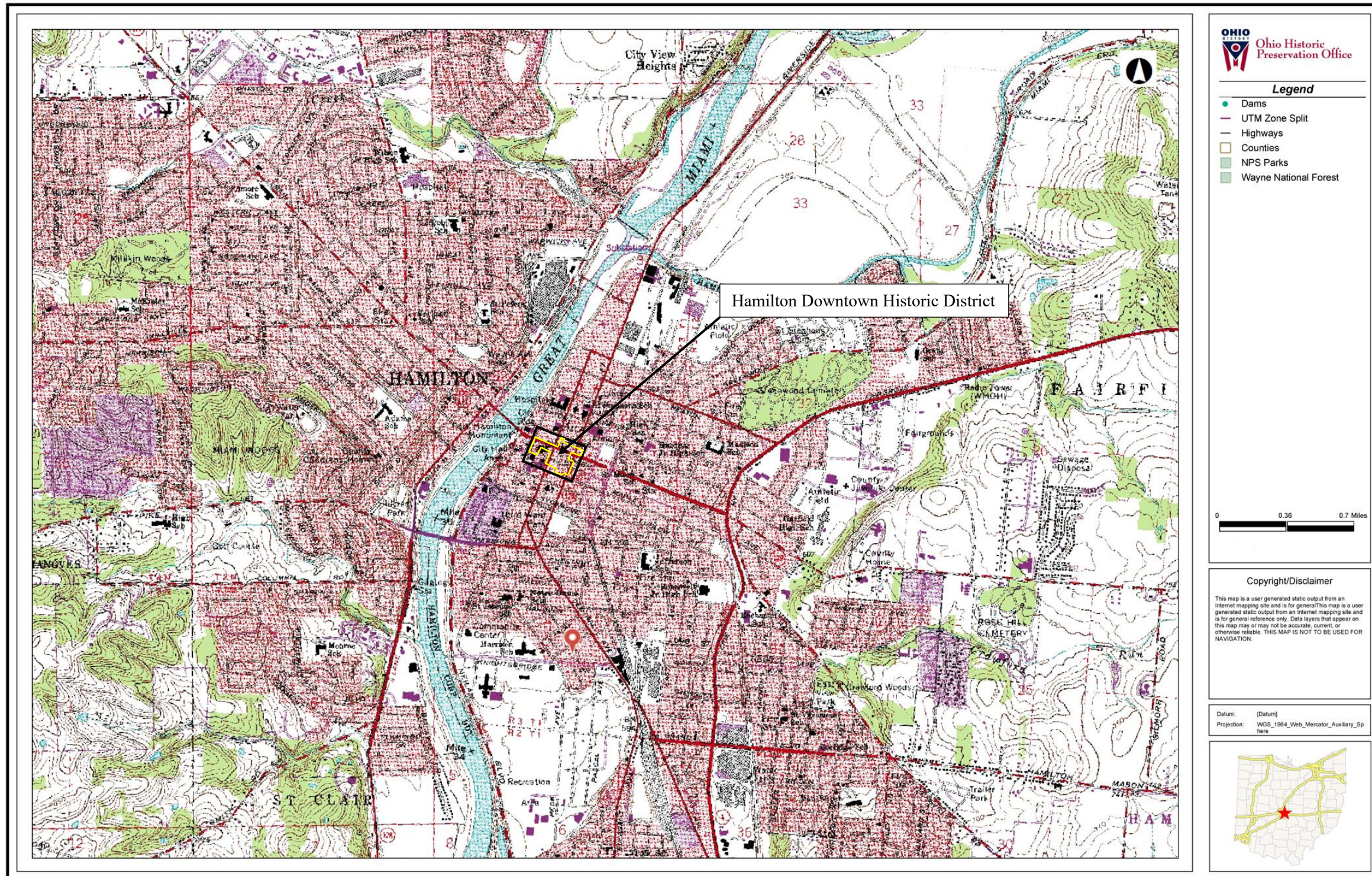
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Hamilton Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Map 4: Hamilton Downtown Historic District Location Map (Source of USGS Topographical Map – Ohio Historic Preservation Office).

**Hamilton Downtown Historic District, Butler county
National Register of Historic Places Historic District Nomination Property Information List**

Resource Number	NR Resource Category	Property Name	Property Street number	Street Directional (N, S, E, W)	Property Sreet Name	Property Street Type (AVE.,BLVD,DR.,LN, RD, ST.)	Property Street Direction (N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, SW)	Property City/Town	County	Date of Construction	Style	Type	Architect (if known)	Builder (if known)	Contributing	Non-Contributing	Previously Listed
C1	Building	Butler County Courthouse	135		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1887-1889	Beaux Arts/Second Empire		D. W. Gibbs		0 (PL)		Yes
C2	Building	Rentschler Building	6	S	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1905-1906	Second Renaissance Revival		Peters, Burns and Pretzinger/George Barkman		1		No
C3	Building	Second National bank/US Bank	219		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1931	Art Deco		Weary and Alford/George Barkman	F.W. Vaughn Building Company	1		No
C4	Building	Dixon-Globe Opera/Robinson Schwenn Building	10		Journal	Sq.		Hamilton	Butler	1866	Romanesque/Renaissance Revival				0 (PL)		Yes
C5/N8	Building	Dollar Building	2	S	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1958	Modernist/Meisian		Winkler, Rank and Beeghly		1	1	No
C6	Building	David's Shoe Store	250		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1954	Modernist				1		No
C7	Building	Dunkel and Fye Grocery/Sara's House Gift and Décor Shop	254		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	c. 1875	Italianate				1		Yes
C8-C9, N3	Building	First National Bank	300		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1910, 1939, 1977	Neo-classical		George Barkman, Childs and Smith	F.W. Vaughn Building Company	2	1	No
C10	Building	George Best and Sons	332		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1915					1		No
C11	Building	Butler County Automobile Club/Max Stacey Florist Shop	350		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1934	Modernist elements				1		No
C12	Object	Statue of Hebe	358		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1885					1		No
C13-C14	Building	Mehas Music	245		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	c. 1870/modified c. 1950s	Modernist modification				2		No
C15	Building	Weubbold Building	9	N.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1927					1		No
C16	Building	Weubbold and Company Building	11-13	N.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1900					1		No
C17	Building	Schwarz Jewelry Store	19-21	N.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1966	Modernist elemetns				1		No
C18	Building	Zettler Law Office	15-17	N.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1920					1		No

**Hamilton Downtown Historic District, Butler county
National Register of Historic Places Historic District Nomination Property Information List**

C19	Building	Denham-Lashorn-Wiseman Company Men's Furnishing Store/Mayer's Inc. Ladies Wear Store	24	S.	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1929	Art Deco		Rapp and Rapp		1		No
C20	Building	Eatmore Restaurant	110-116	S.	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1929					1		No
C21	Building	Hamilton Hotel/Miami Manor Apartments	118-120	S.	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1907	Second Renaissance Revival		Frederick Mueller		1		No
C22	Building	Sears Department Store/Primary Health Solutions	210	S.	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1951	Modernist				1		No
C23	Building	Cincinnati and Suburban Bell Telephone Company	222	S.	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1920, 1927, ca. 1950	Neo-classical/Modernist				1		No
C24	Building	Stengels Furnishings/Reutti Building/Home Furnishings		S.	Second (at Court Street intersection)	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1870/ca. 1950s	Modernist modification				1		No
C25	Building	Dunlap Clothing Company	18	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	c. 1887	Italianate/Gothic Revival elements				1		No
C26	Building	Home Loan and Building Association/Chaco Credit Union	100	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1923	Second Renaissance Revival		Frederick Mueller	F.W. Vaughn Building Company	1		No
C27	Building	Palace Theatre/Creative Center at the Palace	215	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1920	Beaux Arts		Frederick Mueller		1		No
C28	Building	Trebel Building/Joffe Furniture Store	216	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1890	Romanesque/Richardsonian Romanesque				1		No
C29	Building	Furniture Store	220-224	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1899, 1950			Frederick Mueller		1		No
C30	Building	Federal Building/Butler County Board of Health	301	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1909				Barnes Brothers	1		No
C31	Building	United States Post Office	105		Court	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1933	Beaux Arts		James A. Westmore, Supervising Architect		1		No
C32	Building	Heib Building	221-225		Court	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1961					1		No

**Hamilton Downtown Historic District, Butler county
National Register of Historic Places Historic District Nomination Property Information List**

C33	Building	Hamilton Democrat/Journal News/Butler Tech School of Arts	224-234		Court	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1887, 1911, 1948	Italianate-Renaissance Revival/Romanesque, Modernist		George Barkman		1		No
C34	Building	Independent Order of Oddfellows Hall/Chaco Credit Union	309		Court	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1928	Neo-classical elements				1		No
C35	Building	Furniture Store	311		Ludlow	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1875	Italianate elements				1		No
C36	Building	Law Office	315		Maple	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1899					1		No
C37	Building	Front Street Presbyterian Church	19	S.	Front	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1855, remodel 1940, addition 1960	Renaissance Revival				1		No
C38	Building	Marvin Hotel	23	S.	Front	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1906	Italianate/Renaissance Revival elements				1		No
C39	Building	St. Mary's Catholic Church of God/Front Street Church of God	111	S.	Front	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1856, 1974 remodeling	Gothic Revival				1		No
N1-N2	Building	Siedensticker's Silver-plated Ware Store/Woolworth's Department Store/Ryan's Tavern	237-241		High	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1883-1885 (remodeled 2006-2007)					2		No
N3	Building	Associated with C8-C9 above						Hamilton	Butler								No
N4	Building	Banking Kiosk	108	S.	Second	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1974					1		No
N5	Building	McComb Jewelry Store	11	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1902; remodeling late 1960s-early 1970s					1		No
N6	Building	Associated with C5 above	14	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	c. 1980					1		No
N7	Building	26 South Third Street	26	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1885							
N8	Building	Lowenstein's Furniture/Ringel's Furniture Store	223	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1912, rehabilitation 2015	Frederick Mueller				1		No
N9	Building	Boarding House	20	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	ca. 1880s					1		No
N10	Building		306	S.	Third	St.		Hamilton	Butler	1980					1		No
															37	10	2



1st Street

W. High

us bank

KeyBank

KeyBank

KeyBank

KeyBank







...RINA
SQUARE

...CS Title







MORRIS STEINER BUILDING

We're Open!
Come In!

Leads
3942

1st St
2nd St
3rd St
4th St
5th St
6th St
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SECOND NATIONAL BANK





706

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THE
BIO
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Put the service to work for you.





1866

NORTHWEST BUILDING

RYAN



10



Adult Basic and
Literacy Education



3rd Third

3rd High

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Green Building
This building is making new jobs









Third St

High St

Ernst

Ernst

Convenient

Ernst

Ernst

Ernst





300

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atm
Banking

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first

NATIONAL BANK

AND TRUST CO.

FOUNDED
1863



ERECTED
1930

first

first financial bank


Ohio Lunch

A-1
BAIL
YONDS

OHIO LUNCH

332 HIGH ST

332
HOURS
MON-SAT
6AM-PM
CLOSED SUNDAY

513-892-6446

OHIO LUNCH
EST. 1924

OPEN

Make it an
OHIO LUNCH


SODA
COLD
DRINKS
&
MORE

**Chemist Were
OPEN**





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FIRST
First National Bank

ONE WAY
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EXIT

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RYAN'S TAVERN



JACK & REVILLO

BANK OF AMERICA

BANK OF AMERICA



WUEBBOLD



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K.A. MILLER
MANUFACTURER OF
HARDWARE



JACK A. ZETTLER
Attorney at Law
Certified Public Accountant

HR
No Parking
11:30 AM - 2:00 PM
← →

JACK A. ZETTLER
ATTORNEY AT LAW
CERTIFIED PUBLIC
ACCOUNTANT

FREE PARKING





JACK A. ZETTLER
Attorney at Law
Certified Public Accountant

JACK A. ZETTLER
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EXCEPT
FOR
LOADING
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DELIVERY
OR
REDELIVERY
OR
REWORK









MIAMI MANOR
APARTMENTS
Studio and 1 Bedroom Units
513-662-6468
Managed by MTR MANAGEMENT

110

112

114



MIAMI MAJOR

Primary



COURT ST
APARTMENTS
Studio and 1 Bedroom Units
513-662-6468
Managed by HIB MANAGEMENT

KeyBank
Drive Up ATM
Entrance off
Court St.



A large, multi-story building with a light-colored, textured facade. The ground floor features a long, wide display window with multiple panes. The second floor has a row of four windows with white frames and blinds. The building shows signs of wear and discoloration.

A smaller, two-story building with a similar light-colored facade. The ground floor has a dark awning over the entrance and a large display window. A sign is visible above the window. A silver car is parked in front of the building.

Commercial Bank

Commercial Bank

15





7

C.A. Strupky
Construction, Inc.
HAMILTON, OHIO



HOME
FURNITURE

COURT

SECOND



THEATRE

Cincinnati Bead Co.
JEWELRY BEADS

MAKING MUSIC STUDIOS YAMAHA PIANOS





K

ARTIST CENTER AT THE PALACE





LIPSENCE
Health Care Staffing
Nurse Aide Training

ACCEPTING
APPLICATIONS

CAFE
Full American
Breakfast-Brunch
Desserts

SIBCY CLINE
910-771-8100

SIBCY CLINE
910-771-8100



Third St

Court St

The
Hotel

Albany

ALTH FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

309


ALLWEALTH
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

HOME LOAN & BUILDING ASSOCIATION





THE CREATIVE CENTER AT THE PALACE

STOP



713-275-1310
This building is
finding new life



TRIBET





Sulist County
Health Department



THEATRE

Cincinnati Bead Co.

JEWELRY

BEADS

MEHA'S MUSIC STUDIO

YAMAHA

PIANOS

W



3RD STREET
ASSOCIATES

20





KeyBank





1906

UNITED
21REAS
Center



ATM

Third St

NAVBET



Odd
Fellows
Temple

Allwealth
REAL ESTATE

Allwealth REAL ESTATE

111



UNITED STATES POST OFFICE







HUE BUI DINH

HASTAS

HASTAS



KeyBank



GOVERNMENT

BUTLER TECH School of Arts

ARTS







THE LAW OFFICE OF
HANNA B. HADDAD

THE BUTLER COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION

315





Steeple with cross

PREBYTERIAN
PRESCHOOL

PREBYTERIAN
PRESCHOOL



PRESBYTERIAN
PRESCHOOL





Front Street
CHURCH OF GOD

WOMEN'S BIBLE CLASS
WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM
TUESDAY 7:00 PM
PASTOR BERNARD W. WOOD





Court St

Small text above Onese logo:
Small text below Onese logo:
Onese
Small text below Onese logo:

20

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Hamilton Downtown Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OHIO, Butler

DATE RECEIVED: 6/03/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/27/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/12/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/19/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000458

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 7.18.16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

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

County of Butler

**BOARD OF HEALTH
Combined General Health District**

301 SOUTH THIRD STREET
HAMILTON, OHIO 45011
(513) 863-1770
FAX (513) 863-4372



March 14, 2016

Susan M. Tietz
National Register and Survey Manager
Inventory and Registration
Ohio History Connection
800 E. 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43211-2474

Dear Ms. Tietz:

This letter is to express our gratitude for being considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. We have always felt that this building was a significant historic site, both locally and nationally. The structure at 301 S. Third Street in Hamilton, Ohio was originally built to house the Federal Post Office for Hamilton, Ohio. Construction on the building was completed in 1909. The building has a number of unique features that remain today. We often have visitors who stop in and share their memories of visiting the building in the 1900's. One such visitor shared, "I stood in this very spot when I registered for the draft."

In addition to the post office, the building has been home to the Butler County Board of Elections and the Butler County Sheriff's Office. In 2005, the Butler County Health Department purchased the building from the Butler County Commissioners. The health department occupies the entire building for its administrative offices as well as the Rosin Clinic.

Again, we appreciate your interest in our building. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (513) 887-5237.

Sincerely,

Patricia F. Burg
Director of Administration



To the Ohio Historic Preservation Office:

I am writing as the Chairman of the Downtown Hamilton Central Business Special Improvement District to express our support for the nomination of the Hamilton Downtown Historic District in Hamilton, Butler County, Ohio to the National Register of Historic Places. Hamilton has played an important role in the commercial and political history of Butler County and Ohio's Miami Valley. The nomination brings to public notice and recognition the district's importance for the development and growth of commerce in Hamilton during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It identifies buildings and other resources that represent the history and architecture of the district through this period.

We believe that public awareness of the historic district will foster a spirit of stewardship and guide the future growth and development of Hamilton's downtown. We hope that you will take our strong support into consideration as you evaluate the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Hamilton Downtown Historic District.

Sincerely,

Keith Nott
Chairman – Downtown Hamilton Central Business Special Improvement District

Downtown Hamilton Central Business Special Improvement District, Inc.

P.O. Box 1316, Hamilton, Ohio 45012

March 14, 2016

State Historic Preservation Officer
c/o National Register Staff

Ohio History Connection
State Historic Preservation Office
800 E. 17th Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43211-2424

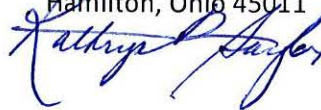
To whom it may concern

SUBJECT: Hamilton Downtown Historic District, 311 and 315 Ludlow St. Hamilton,
Butler County

My name is Kathryn R. Saylor. I own the above mentioned property, 311 and 315
Ludlow St. Hamilton, Ohio. Recently, I received a letter from your department,
in reference to to having my property submitted to the N. H. R. (National Historic
Register). I DO NOT want this property to be in this association. there is no
advantage to my being affiliated with the N.H.R. therefore I respectfully decline.
I am the sole owner. Do not put my building on the National Historic Register.

Your consideration is appreciated. However, I do not want to participate. You may
call me, should there be any further questions at 513-313-4147.

Kathryn R. Saylor
411 N. Third St.
Hamilton, Ohio 45011



cc. KRS

Sworn to and subscribed in my presence by Kathryn R. Saylor
this 17 day of March yr. 2014
All signing parties have proven identity by Ohio Drivers License
My commission expires June 20 yr. 2018
printed notary name Jeri Murnahan Bridges
Jeri Murnahan Bridges





RECEIVED 2280

JUN - 3 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

May 27, 2016

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief, National Register
and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl. (2280)
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find four (4) new National Register nominations for Ohio and one (1) returned multiple property documentation cover. All appropriate notification procedures have been followed for the new nomination submissions.

NEW NOMINATION

Hamilton Downtown Historic District
Lubal Manufacturing & Distribution Co.
Bimm Fireproof Warehouse
Delco Building

COUNTY

Butler
Franklin
Montgomery
Montgomery

RESUBMITTED MULTIPLE PROPERTY SUBMISSION

Morgan's Raid in Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio MPS
(Ref. No: 64501229)

COUNTY

Multiple

The MPS cover document was returned to states on 12/23/2014 for corrections and revision of property type information. The requested revisions have been addressed.

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nominations for the Hamilton Downtown Historic District and Lubal Manufacturing & Distribution Co. nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and the Morgan's Raid in Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio MPS.

If you have questions or comments about these documents, please contact the National Register staff in the Ohio Historic Preservation Office at (614) 298-2000.

Sincerely,

for Barbara Power

Kox A. Logan, Jr.
Executive Director and CEO
State Historic Preservation Officer
Ohio History Connection

Enclosures

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NPS TRANSMITTAL CHECK LIST

OHIO HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
800 E. 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43211
(614)-298-2000

The following materials are submitted on May 27, 2016
For nomination of the Hamilton Downtown to the National Register of
Historic Places: ITD, Butler Co, OH

- Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
___ Paper PDF
- ___ Multiple Property Nomination Cover Document
___ Paper ___ PDF
- ___ Multiple Property Nomination form
___ Paper ___ PDF
- Photographs
___ Prints TIFFs
- CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)
___ Paper Digital
- Sketch map(s)/Photograph view map(s)/Floor plan(s)
___ Paper PDF
- Piece(s) of correspondence
___ Paper PDF
- ___ Other _____

COMMENTS:

- ___ Please provide a substantive review of this nomination
- ___ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do ___ do not
Constitute a majority of property owners
- ___ Other: _____