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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Nomination Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name L. Harbach & Sons Wholesale Furniture Warehouse and Factory Complex  
other names/site number L. Harbach's Sons Company; Way-Helms Co. & Red Cross Mattress; L. Ginsberg & Sons wholesale furniture warehouse; A.A. Schneiderhahn electronic appliances warehouse

2. Location

street & number 300 - 316 SW Fifth Street not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Des Moines vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50309

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Steve King Date 3 Nov 2015

State Historical Society of Iowa  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

- I, hereby certify that this property is:
- |  |   |                                  |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register       | Signature of Keeper <u>Patrick Anderson</u> | Date of Action <u>12/21/2015</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.                           | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register     | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.                           | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.                           | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register                | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.                           | _____                                       | _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain):                                  | _____                                       | _____                            |

L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse and Factory Complex  
Name of Property

Polk, Iowa  
County and State

### 5. Classification

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

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

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

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

#### Number of Resources within Property (do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

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

N/A

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

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

INDUSTRY: industrial storage

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other CONCRETE

#### Narrative Description

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

L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

#### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

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

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

#### Primary Location of Additional Data:

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY

COMMERCE

#### Period of Significance

1906 - 1965

#### Significant Dates

1906

circa 1940s

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

#### Architect/Builder

unknown

L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
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### 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than 1 acre

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>448154</u>	<u>448154</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer James, MAHP

organization Jennifer James Communications, LC date May 1, 2015

street & number 4209 Kingman Blvd. telephone 515/250-7196 email jenjames123@gmail.com

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50311

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

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

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name See continuation sheet

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

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

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

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



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**7. Narrative Description**

The L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex is located within Iowa's capital city, within Des Moines' preeminent former warehousing and jobbing district that borders the southern edge of the main west side downtown central commercial business district. Major railroad tracks defined the northern edge of this industrial zone (with smaller trackage branching off), the Des Moines River bordered the east edge, and the Raccoon River bordered the south edge. Viaducts carried vehicular traffic over the rail lines. An arterial road, Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, has replaced the northern tracks and some viaducts have been removed. The Harbach factory complex is located next to the former major rail tracks, occupying the southwest corner of SW Fifth Street and Elm Street, approximately a half-acre of flat land. To the rear is a public alley, which in the early twentieth century also contained rail trackage that has since been vacated. With the recent construction of Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, Elm Street has been closed to traffic at SW Fifth Street, but the street and public sidewalk remain intact. The area retains a number of industrial buildings, with industrial use maintained such as at the Harbach complex, where manufacturing still occurs in the Harbach factory building and warehousing, in the Harbach warehouse. [See Figure 2, Aerial Photograph, 2013]

The L. Harbach & Sons factory complex is made up of two functionally related buildings, each five stories in height with brick exteriors completed in 1906, and a middle paved loading courtyard between the two buildings. The furniture and mattress factory building (316 SW Fifth Street; Lot 14) and wholesale furniture sales and shipping warehouse (300 SW Fifth Street; Lot 12 and north 22.5 feet of Lot 13) may have been the work of noted Des Moines architecture firm Liebbe, Nourse & Rasmussen, as will be discussed further in the Statement of Significance section. The factory and warehouse have a shared loading dock addition at the rear of the paved courtyard (south 43.73 feet of Lot 13). [See Figure 3, Site Map]

It is important to note that the functional relationship between the two buildings includes five extant connections and conditions:

1) Reflecting their construction as rail-served factory and warehouse, the factory building was built 14 feet shorter than the warehouse to accommodate an industrial rail siding that ran in the alley behind the buildings on the west side of the 300 block of SW Fifth Street and trackage continued into the warehouse.

2) A basement utility tunnel used to distribute steam heat from the factory boiler to the warehouse still exists between the basements of the two buildings; a shared water line also ran through this tunnel until about six years ago. (Sanders)

3) On the elevations overlooking the loading courtyard, the two buildings both have infilled elevated-skybridge connections, visual evidence of the literal connection the two buildings shared to a non-extant narrow three-story manufacturing and stable building, 310 SW Fifth Street; this smaller building was removed sometime before publication of the 1950 Sanborn map, likely to facilitate loading and unloading trucks.

4) The shared second-generation loading dock connects to both buildings in the 43-foot-wide middle lot. This 1969 one-story gable-roofed addition contains three through truck-loading-dock bays; a wall divides the dock so that the north truck bay is owned by and accessible from the warehouse, and the south two

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truck bays are owned by and accessible from the factory building. The 1920 Sanborn map shows a "loading court" in roughly the same location, which was removed by the 1950 Sanborn.

5) The middle paved loading courtyard is shared by the two buildings, as was the case when the buildings were first constructed in 1906. Currently the courtyard is part of the 316 SW Fifth Street parcel, but the warehouse owner has a cross-access easement to reach its truck bay.

The term "furniture warehouse" will mean 300 SW Fifth Street; the term "factory building" will mean 316 SW Fifth Street; the term "frame shop/stable" and "loading court" will mean the nonextant 310 SW Fifth Street; the term "loading dock addition" will mean the extant dock that straddles the furniture warehouse and factory building.

*Furniture Warehouse (1906, 1969 addition)*

Exterior

The main façade of this five-story masonry-veneered warehouse is the east elevation, which faces SW Fifth Street. The building is located on a corner, with the north elevation facing Elm Street being the secondary façade. The building was constructed to its lot lines on the east, north, and west; it extends some 22 feet into the adjoining lot on the south. To the east and north it abuts the public concrete sidewalk. To the west, the building abuts the paved public alley. To the south, the building faces a paved inner yard, where a shared loading dock spans between this building and the factory building to the south. The rectangular plan measure 89 feet wide by 133 feet deep. (Polk County Assessor's Office) The building's masonry is a character-defining feature: unglazed concrete brick with reddish mortar defines the raised basement and first story. The upper floors are veneered in dark red (clay) brick with light mortar. Most window openings remain, with cast-stone/concrete lintels and sills that contrast with the red brick. The roof is a low-pitched gable that drains to gutters with two drainpipes on both the north and south elevations. Most window openings remain, although basement windows have been infilled with masonry to match; this change may be a response to historic flooding in the area.

The east elevation is mostly symmetrical in design. The wall runs straight, with no decorative brickwork, from sidewalk to parapet crowned with metal projecting cornice. This elevation features six columns of original narrow window openings, each topped with a cast-stone/concrete keystone lintel and bottomed with a narrow sill. The current wood-framed 1/1 double-hung windows were installed circa 1986. Pre-1950 truck bays reflect the changing nature of warehousing transportation of goods from rail-based to truck-based; the three recessed bays each have a metal rolling garage door and connect to an interior truck well; in front is a concrete apron that extends to the street. A modern metal egress door infills an older but not original doorway at the southeast corner. The original entrance point at the northeast corner remains; this recessed entry contains a wider replacement door system and removable awning in the upper transom area. An early/original white painted advertising sign remains between fourth and fifth floor windows; it has been painted over with red paint, but is still visible, reading: "L. Harbach Sons Co. Wholesale Furniture Warehouse." A metal fire escape provides egress from one of the northern columns of windows, running from second floor to roof, and includes a metal pipe that may have been used to connect to a rooftop water

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tower (nonextant; appeared on 1920, 1950, 1957 Sanborn maps).

As with the east elevation, the north elevation is mostly symmetrical in design: The wall runs straight, with no decorative brickwork, from sidewalk to just above the fifth-floor windows, where a metal gutter hangs with two downspouts. This elevation features columns of narrow window openings, each topped with a cast-stone/concrete keystone lintel and bottomed with a narrow sill; openings contain circa-1986 wood-framed clear-glass double-hung windows (ten columns on the first story; nine columns in second- through fifth stories). First-story openings vary somewhat and include a wider opening (possibly a doorway given a change in brickwork below) complete with wider flat-arch keystone lintel. At the northwest corner is a newer window opening within an older infilled truck-loading bay that connects to the interior train well. An older white painted advertising sign is partially visible through red paint at the fifth floor level, reading in part: "Ginsberg's Warehouse," relating to the use and later ownership of this building by owners of the Ginsberg furniture company beginning in the early 1930s.

The rear west elevation is mostly symmetrical, walls run up to the slightly pitched gabled roofline with metal coping. There are four original window columns with narrow window openings bookended by plain flat cast-stone/concrete lintels and narrower projecting sills. Three first-floor window openings have been infilled with red masonry; the fourth window opening remains with an infill panel. Other window openings plus a new second-story opening feature circa-1986 wood-framed double-hung windows. A metal fire escape provides egress from the southernmost column of windows. Two "ghost" white-painted advertising signs are visible through a cover-up layer of red paint on and under the fifth-floor window level: the older reading "L. Harbach Sons Co.," and the other "Ginsberg's" with additional lettering that is not readable. The southwest corner of the train well entrance has been rebuilt at date unknown.

The south elevation overlooks the load dock and paved loading courtyard. As with the north elevation, the roofline terminates just above the fifth-floor windows and a gutter hangs there with two downspouts. Projecting above the roof is the penthouse to a pre-1950 freight elevator. The south elevation contains five original columns of windows defined by plain flat cast-stone/concrete lintels and narrower projecting sills; original industrial metal pivoted automatic fire windows with ribbed wire glass remain in place on second through fifth floors; limited first-floor windows remain but are covered by the loading dock addition. (Fenton) The first story also contains seven pre-1950 steel-framed industrial windows with clear glass added to illuminate the interior loading area between the south loading dock and east interior truck well. Near the loading dock on the second and third story are brick-infilled rectangular openings, where skybridge connection occurred to the non-extant frame shop/stable. The southwest corner train well entrance has been rebuilt at date unknown; a nonoriginal barn door partially infills the opening. The 1969 loading dock addition has a raised concrete floor, walls sheathed with various wood-product sheeting, and a pitched metal roof partially overlaid with asphalt shingles; the addition for this building extends only to the northernmost through truck loading bay.

No claims of archaeological significance are made.



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**Interior**

The interior is largely open with limited masonry walls on the first story, but otherwise wood stud framed walls with horizontal building board over the single-wythe brick veneer; wood columns extending to exposed wood ceilings (except where noted); and narrow wood strip flooring. The building is supported by five rows north to south of ten each wood columns that align under east-west wood beams (except where noted). As with typical warehouses, columns are largest on lower floors where loads are greatest and include metal collars for additional support on lower levels.

Pedestrian circulation occurs via the older or perhaps original frame-enclosed wood staircase that runs up through the middle of the building near the central wood freight elevator. Modern (circa 1986) fire egress stairs were installed first through third floors in the southeast corner exiting to SW Fifth Street and near the southwest corner exiting into the train well near the alley. A 1986-era staircase with metal pipe rails exists between first and second floors.

Freight vertical circulation occurs via two double-sided freight elevators that extend basement to fifth floor. The central wood freight elevator is early if not original; its double openings on the north and south feature wood safety gates and some wood doors. The clay tile-enclosed freight elevator on the south wall appears to have been installed between the 1920 and 1950 Sanborn maps; on the first floor, dual openings exist, one on the exterior (loading dock) and one on the interior loading area; all floors contain metal-clad fire doors.

Main pedestrian access into the building is through the east front door into a small open entry area with steps leading up to the main first floor. The first floor is largely open, divided into semi-finished office furniture showroom to the north and warehouse shipping/unloading areas to the south. The showroom dates to circa 1986, with some remodeling following the 1993 "Great Flood" (as termed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), when river water filled the basement and into the first floor. The floor is carpeted, walls finished with gypsum board, wood columns with metal collars visible, and exposed wood ceiling that is extra tall at this level.

The warehouse space can be entered via the three-bay truck well, with three rolling metal garage doors between brick piers. The well has a concrete floor at sidewalk level, clay-tile walls, and a paneled ceiling, and four steel I-beam columns on concrete pads. Trucks back up to the interior dock, which is the height of the first floor and is covered in wood-strip flooring. The west clay-tile wall enclosing the truck well has three openings with rolling metal doors that align with the truck bays. The area between this truck well wall and loading dock addition has exposed insulation infilling the ceiling; wood columns extend to lower steel I-beams; the floor is wood strip. Windows on the south wall are industrial steel multi-pane frames with clear wire glass that date to the midcentury or earlier. A large garage door opens to the loading dock addition, which has a concrete floor, exposed ceiling containing wood rafters, and a gypsum-board dividing wall.

Another means of egress into the warehouse is through the southwest rear corner train well, up stairs that enter into a rear door. This train well may be original to the building or a post-1920 addition; it was not noted



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on the 1920 Sanborn map but was on the 1950 Sanborn map. The Polk County Assessor's Office notes the train well as a 13-foot by 73-foot improvement. (Polk County Assessor) The 1950 Sanborn indicated a clay tile wall ran the full width of the building; this wall remains and has large loading door openings as well as pedestrian door openings plus a central staircase. The well floor level at the south end is at alley-height, which is approximately 5 feet lower than the first-floor height; this area has concrete floor, exposed masonry walls with a large loading area enclosed by oversize metal-clad doors, and exposed wood ceiling. The central portion of the train well contains a staircase. The north end contains two rooms, one of which was unavailable for inspection. The far north rear/train well area is at first-floor level, walls are clad in gypsum board, and ceiling is exposed wood. On the second floor for most of the width of the building, the wood-strip floor is raised several feet; this bump up provided rail car clearance within the train well area. (Isaacson) (The metal pipe railing on the second-floor train well bump-up dates to circa 1986.)

The second floor continues the finished showroom/office finish to the north, with unfinished original warehouse space to the south. The ceiling is lower on this floor. Approximately six offices, a conference room, overflow showroom display, and break room have been created with gypsum-board walls installed between columns, carpet over wood floors, dropped acoustical-tile ceiling in part, and exposed building board walls, exposed wood ceilings, and strip wood floors in the remainder. Elevator stacks and the wood staircase continue to fifth floor.

The typical upper floor unfinished warehouse areas are nearly the same in appearance: The space is mostly open, except for elevators and stairs. Walls are wood building boards, which back the exterior brick veneer. All wood columns remain in place, with columns smaller and minus metal collars on fourth and fifth floors. Floors are wood strip, walls are exposed building board, and ceilings are exposed wood structure. On the fifth floor, the ceiling has a slightly pitched gable that slopes equally to north and south. Also on the fifth floor is a modern telecommunications antenna mechanical room in the southwest corner.

The basement is largely open, with a brick wall supporting the truck well on the east and a half concrete-half brick wall supporting the train well interior wall (there is no basement beneath the train well, although ceiling beams run through this support wall). There are also two sprinkler rooms (fire sprinklers divide into east and west coverage of the building) and the two elevator stacks. The floor is poured concrete, the walls are poured concrete about half the way up, topped with red brick into which are inset partial basement windows (at least some remain on the interior). The west third of the basement has extra steel supports wrapping the original wood columns and east-west steel I-beams; these supports may have been installed to accommodate heavy carpet rolls that were stored in the building during the Ginsberg furniture era (1930s through beyond the period of significance). (Isaacson) A utility tunnel with concrete curbs and downward sloping ramp extend into a large opening on the south wall (note: this area was sheathed in plastic, with a large square hole/opening in the concrete ramp floor, impeding closer inspection). This tunnel connects to the furniture factory building to the south and once contained steam heat pipes and a water line; the tunnel is capped with a concrete wall in the factory building, a change necessitated due to the 1993 flood. (Sanders)

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Warehouse building character-defining features:

Key character-defining features of this building include:

- Brick exterior with basement/first floor clad in (raw) concrete brick and upper floors in red clay brick
- Harbach company and Ginsberg's warehouse painted signs
- East façade parapet wall with metal cornice
- Original narrow window openings with cast-stone lintels and sills
- Original metal industrial windows and midcentury steel windows on first floor south elevation
- East elevation three truck loading bays
- Train well entrance on southwest corner (wall has been partially rebuilt and contains non-original door)
- Elevator penthouse
- Interior freight elevator stacks
- Interior wood central staircase
- First-floor freight-loading areas: truck well, loading area, train well
- Typical warehouse interior: Wood columns, wood floors, wood board walls, exposed wood ceilings (note: despite some office finishes added to parts of first and second floors, these original warehouse materials appear to exist beneath carpet/drop ceilings/gypsum board)
- Second-floor raised floor in rear of over train well
- Basement: concrete floors, perimeter partial concrete walls topped with brick, support walls for truck well and train well, columns, steel column wraps, steel I-beams, exposed wood ceiling
- Basement utility tunnel

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*Furniture Factory Building (1906, 1969 addition)*

Exterior

For this 5-story building with masonry bearing walls, the east elevation is the primary façade and faces SW Fifth Street. A public sidewalk runs up to the front of the building along SW Fifth Street; the paved public alley begins several feet from the rear of the building. To the south side is the side yard/loading dock for the industrial complex to the south; to the north is the paved parking courtyard bounded by the rear loading dock addition. The building of brown variegated brick has a mostly rectangular footprint, measuring 69 feet wide on the east elevation, 66 feet wide on the west elevation, and some 121 feet long on the north and south elevations; these measurements exclude the circa-1969 loading dock and elevator bay addition(s) on the north side. The difference in width between front and rear of building is due to an irregular profile on the south elevation, with a recessed wall that may have ensured light and ventilation had another industrial building been built up to the lot line.

The east façade is largely symmetrical, defined by arched recesses that contain windows; six brick piers that begin at the water table band and terminate at the brick cornice with decorative brick detailing frame the recesses. Behind the metal-coped cornice lies the roof, which slopes gently to the south. The brick piers frame five columns of paired windows with continuous cast-stone/concrete sills; at the fifth story, segmental brick arches top the windows with a center brick key. The front entrance is located in the northeast corner within the fifth "window column"; the white painted water table band (likely cast-stone or concrete) runs up and outlines the door opening, which is crowned by a white painted pointed pediment. Two steps lead up to the replacement door system; a sign hangs in the large transom area above. The basement is elevated, with partial windows with cast-stone/concrete sills that sit at the public sidewalk level. The windows here, as on all elevations, appear to be a mix of old two-over-two wood single-hung (the lower sash has spring-loaded window pins, instead of sash weights, and the upper sashes have nothing), older one-over-one wood, and modern one-over-one wood double-hung. (Fenton) Between the fourth and fifth floors is an early-twentieth-century sign, part of which was painted over circa-early 1970s; the sign appears to read: "L. Harbach Sons Co. Factory." (Lettering is somewhat unclear because the brick piers were painted green circa early 1970s, when white metal panels were affixed between the piers, covering the windows; the metal panels were removed in the 1990s. (Sanders)

The south side elevation is not symmetrical. At the front (east) end, the wall bumps out three feet; this area contains only one column of windows and a slight wrapping of the primary face brick via quoining to common brick, plus water table band and cornice treatment that just turn the corner from the east main façade a few feet. The wall then recesses. Twelve columns of windows arranged in pairs march across the wall; windows are regularly spaced, most being double-hung windows, each with segmental arch lintel above and cast-stone/concrete sill. At least one window opening is infilled with brick (vines cloak part of the wall). The roofline slopes for much of the wall down to the gutter with one or more downspouts. At the rear of the elevation, the roofline rises to continue the existing cornice treatment. In the southwest corner, the chimney projects outward from the wall and above the roofline. Also in this corner, on the first story, is a large rectangular opening infilled with a panel; this was built as a window per trace of the segmental arch



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brickwork and later expanded to become a doorway to a second now-nonextant loading dock that existed as of the 1950 Sanborn map.

The north elevation features the same slight wrapping of the primary face brick via quoining to common brick, plus water table band and cornice treatment that just turn the corner from the east main façade a few feet. The basement is elevated, with partial windows. The remaining windows are regularly spaced, most being double-hung windows, each with segmental arch lintel above and cast-stone/concrete sill. An early/original metal fire escape is attached to the northeastern portion of the wall, with interior access from the first of eleven columns of windows. A middle column of windows, which illuminates the interior staircase, is differently spaced than the others and contains three windows (a fourth has been infilled with brick). The next two window columns at second and third floors contain brick-infilled rectangular openings where skybridge connection occurred to the non-extant frame shop/stable. A circa-1969 freight elevator stack built of concrete masonry units (CMU), attaches approximately two-thirds of the way back on the elevation; the loading dock addition wraps around the elevator shaft. The loading dock addition has a raised concrete floor, walls sheathed with various wood-product sheeting, two truck bays for this building (one with through garage doors, the other infilled), and a pitched metal roof partially overlaid with asphalt shingles. There are four columns of visible windows on the rear third of the elevation, on floors three through five; the first two floors are obscured by the loading dock roof and mass. A second original brick elevator penthouse occupies the northwest corner of the roof.

The rear west elevation contains a symmetrical arrangement of seven columns of window openings; each opening is topped with a brick segmental arched lintel and intact openings having a cast stone/concrete sill. The far left column of windows is infilled with modern metal egress doors leading to a modern exterior metal fire egress staircase. The second column contains four-lite hollow metal-framed windows with wire glass. A possible centered first-story doorway has been infilled with CMU. A southwest corner window opening has been enlarged such as to create a truck bay and later infilled with CMU. Vines obscure a few windows. An early/original painted sign exists between the fourth- and fifth-story windows, reading in part "Harbach Sons Co. Factory" (the fire escape obscures a small portion of the painted sign).

Interior

On the interior, main pedestrian access is through the eastern front door, which steps into a lobby with finished painted walls, concrete ceiling with squared concrete beams supported by squared concrete columns and pilasters (on the north wall), and non-original flooring. (Note: The lobby flooring was changed following cleanup from the destructive "Great Flood of 1993," as termed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; this building had some 16 inches of standing water. (Sanders)) Three steps are located near the entrance door, which opens to the lobby. At the opposite end of the lobby is a wide staircase to the second floor; this staircase is paneled with wood.

The building features a largely fireproof-for-its-time construction, reflecting its early use as a mattress and furniture factory, industry that required work with flammable materials. The interior contains eight rows of concrete columns (wood on the fourth and fifth floor), from north to south, and four rows from east to west.



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The interior is largely poured-concrete construction, and most if not all of these original components appear to remain in place: basement perimeter walls, floors, and ceiling are concrete with massive squared concrete columns; first floor through third floor feature concrete floors and ceilings with concrete columns that tie into concrete ceiling beams; fourth floor has concrete floors and wood columns with metal collars, and a gypsum-board ceiling over the original exposed wood ceiling (required for life-safety code); fifth floor has original wood floors, wood columns, and exposed wood ceiling. The concrete columns narrow in profile on upper levels. Perimeter walls on first through fifth floors are brick; most brick is exposed, but some is plaster-over-brick. Interior walls appear to be mostly modern gypsum board partitions that mostly follow the column structure; these modern walls create an open corridor on the north third of the plan, with artist loft studios on the south two-thirds of the plan. The spaces have mostly modern doors, due in part to City of Des Moines life-safety code requirements. An exception is the large pre-1950 loading dock door located first floor south wall at the southwest corner; this door corresponds to a non-extant loading dock near the rail line that was extended from the south elevation of this building sometime after the 1920 Sanborn map and before the 1950 Sanborn map.

Pedestrian circulation occurs via the wide first-to-second-floor staircase and the narrower original or early brick-enclosed second-to-fifth-floor wood staircase with wood railings. Access to the roof is via a non-original ladder in the staircase. Access to the basement is via stairs tucked upper-level staircase; a tin-clad fire door is in place here. Modern open metal fire egress stairs connect to the rear west elevation (this was a life-safety code mandate for use of the building as artist studios); early/original metal fire escape stairs connect to the north side elevation.

Freight circulation occurs via the original brick-encased elevator stack with replacement elevator and modern fire doors in the rear northwest corner and the larger modern circa-1969 freight elevator on the north wall.

The full basement is largely open, with a brick-enclosed staircase, large brick-walled boiler room on the south wall, and brick-walled vault with decorative metal door. The basement vault corresponds to the outline on the first-floor direct above of what appears to have been a first-floor vault stacked atop the basement vault; the first-floor vault has been removed at an unknown date. The boiler room may have provided a shared heating plant for the factory and first floor of the warehouse; the shared utility tunnel still had a shared water line until circa 2008. The heating tunnel opening remains visible and has been capped with a concrete masonry unit wall to keep future floodwaters from rising into the basement via this route. (Sanders)

Factory building character-defining features:

Key character-defining features of this building include:

- Brick exterior, including primary façade brickwork
- Harbach factory painted signs

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- Window openings with cast-stone sills
- Wood double-hung windows (two-over-two appears to be the original configuration)
- Water table course
- Pedimented main front door opening
- Elevator penthouse
- Chimney
- Interior first-floor lobby (existing configuration may not be original)
- Interior staircase
- Interior perimeter walls with mix of exposed brick and plastered brick; any windowsills on plastered brick
- Interior concrete: columns, floors, ceilings, ceiling beams
- Interior wood: fourth- and fifth-floor wood columns and exposed ceilings, fourth- and fifth-floor wood floors
- First-floor southwest corner loading dock door
- Original rear freight elevator brick stack
- Basement utility tunnel
- Basement boiler room
- Basement vault

Integrity of the Buildings

The L. Harbach & Sons Wholesale Furniture Warehouse and Factory Complex retains integrity for National Register listing as a rare surviving warehouse-factory complex in Des Moines, with a warehouse that successfully transitioned from rail- to truck-reliant shipping. In addition, the buildings are rare survivors of the many commercial and industrial buildings constructed by the pioneering Harbach furniture family, two generations of which dominated retail furniture, wholesale furniture, manufactured furniture and mattresses, undertaking, and wholesale undertaking supplies in Des Moines and central Iowa, as well as being a leader statewide in these categories.

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*Seven Aspects of Integrity:*

The L. Harbach & Sons Wholesale Furniture Warehouse and Factory Complex maintains a high degree of integrity in all seven respects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location: With regard to location, the Harbach complex integrity is excellent. The warehouse and factory buildings remain at their original site, with their original orientation of public sidewalk in front of the east façade as well as north secondary façade of the warehouse, with a public alley at the rear west elevations.

Design: The design continues to reflect the Harbach buildings' historic function of fireproof factory building with warehouse for storage, shipping, and wholesaling. The warehouse illustrates both train and truck shipping, with the train bay entrance in the rear and truck bay entrances in the front. The noncontributing circa-1969 elevator shaft and loading dock continues the historic use of the narrower middle lot as a loading area. The interiors retain key aspects that define them as fireproof factory (concrete) and storage warehouse (wood interiors with columns but few walls).

Setting: The overall integrity of setting is good. The Harbach complex is located on the west side of the 300 block of SW Fifth Street, south of the former railroad tracks, on a block that retains many industrial buildings. The loss of factory and warehouse buildings elsewhere within the former wholesaling and jobbing district elevates the importance of these rare surviving buildings that remain.

Materials: The integrity of materials is very good to excellent. The Harbach complex exteriors retain their original building materials: clay brick, concrete brick (warehouse first-floor only), and cast-stone/concrete details on the exterior. So, too, do the interiors, with the mostly fireproof concrete of the factory and the exposed, unfinished wood in the warehouse. In these regards, the integrity is very good.

Workmanship: The integrity of workmanship is very good to excellent. The quality of craftsmanship is clearly expressed throughout the exterior in the high-quality brickwork, facade brick detailing on the factory, and cast concrete details. Inside, the factory interior expresses workmanship with the solidly cast concrete columns, ceiling beams, as well as top level sturdily laid wood floors and installed wood beams—all of which remain in excellent condition. Inside the warehouse, the neatly laid wood floors, hewn beams, and exposed ceilings clearly express the building technologies of the time.

Feeling: The integrity of feeling is very good at the Harbach complex. The industrial-finished elevations and interiors readily convey their industrial heritage, which continues to this day with manufacturing of furniture, clay goods, and other such artistic works in the factory and warehousing of furniture in the furniture warehouse.

Association: The integrity of association is very good to excellent. With the painted L. Harbach & Sons and Ginsberg's signs still visible, and the exteriors largely unchanged, the Harbach, Davidson, and Ginsberg family owners would readily recognize these buildings. The buildings also retain their association as part of

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the wholesaling and jobbing district through their location in the 300 block of SW Fifth Street.

*Future Plans*

The L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex, 300 and 316 SW Fifth Street warehouse and factory buildings, have recently been purchased by a joint ownership, once again re-uniting the ownership of these functionally related buildings. The new ownership is applying for state and federal historic tax credits in order to rehabilitate the buildings following the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The buildings will be converted to housing, possibly with limited first-floor retail space.



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**8. Narrative Statement of Significance**

The L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex is locally significant under Criterion A – Industry and Criterion A – Commerce for its association with pioneering furniture manufacturer in Des Moines and one of the largest furniture wholesalers in Iowa, L. Harbach & Sons Co., followed successively by two other leading furniture retailers/wholesalers who owned and occupied the buildings through the period of significance. The buildings represent the industrial and commercial roles played in Des Moines and in Iowa by L. Harbach & Sons, a company and a family that made important commercial, real estate, and civic contributions to Des Moines from the 1850s through the 1920s—and these buildings are rare surviving extant buildings constructed by the Harbach family that represent their significant contributions to Des Moines. The factory and warehouse also are associated with two other leading Iowa furniture retail families, the Davidsons and the Ginsbergs, during their successive use and ownership of the buildings from the 1920s through 1985. The Ginsberg company tailored the warehouse to meet the evolving needs of furniture warehousing and distribution as trucking replaced rail transit. The period of significance dates from the construction of the buildings (1906) through the 50-year cutoff (1965), denoting the continued ownership and use of the buildings by three major Des Moines-based furniture companies.

*Significance of the L. Harbach & Sons Co. and successive on-site furniture manufacturing and jobbing*

The L. Harbach's Sons Co. and predecessor Harbach family firms including L. Harbach & Sons Co. manufactured furniture for more than seventy years in Des Moines, and occupied this factory complex from 1906 to 1928. These large industrial buildings allowed the company to upgrade its manufacturing to early-twentieth-century modern factory conditions to remain competitive in a changing marketplace. The warehouse allowed the company to accommodate stored materials as well as associated handling equipment in tandem with the rail line behind its complex. The Warehouse and Factory Complex also represents some of the earliest and largest industrial construction in Des Moines' then-newly emerging warehouse and jobbing district south of the major rail lines—an important real estate development, and one of the last major such real estate development projects undertaken by the L. Harbach & Sons Co. and its founder, Louis Harbach. Louis Harbach was noted during his lifetime as an important real estate developer in Des Moines who “set the pace” innovatively, building the first furniture factory in Des Moines; constructing the first four-, five-, and six-story retail commercial buildings in the city; continuing to improve his commercial buildings; and erecting the first building dedicated exclusively to mortuary purposes in the city (completed in 1916)—all of these buildings are non-extant, which raise the importance of these two rare-surviving functionally related factory and warehouse buildings. (*Des Moines Daily News*, August 30, 1898; Halstead: 34)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, L. Harbach & Sons Co. was one of two major furniture-manufacturing plants in Des Moines—the other being Schmitt and Henry Manufacturing Company, established 1884 and specialized in mattresses and upholstered goods. As described by the *Des Moines News* in 1903: “Two large furniture manufactory establishments are those of L. Harbach Sons Company and the Schmitt and Henry Manufacturing Company. Both are old in years and ripe in success.” (*Des*

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*Moines News*, July 16, 1903, as cited in Jacobsen: 8-8) Both companies would go on to construct new manufacturing plants in the emerging southwest factory district, also known as F.M. Hubbell's Factory Addition. Schmitt and Henry's plant was constructed over time between 1901 and 1914, and the building sections stand three and four stories in height (309 SW Eighth Street; NRHP 2010). In contrast, the Harbach family built its new factory and warehouse buildings, each five stories in height, as a planned development begun and completed in 1905-1906.

Before beginning construction, the Harbachs contributed political clout and dirt from excavating their buildings to the 1905 construction of a levee extension to protect their new factory site and other existing factories from river flooding. By July 1906, the Harbach factory building was nearing completion. *The Register and Leader* reported: "The Harbach furniture building on South Fifth street is nearing completion. The company expects to erect another large building on the lot adjoining the site of the present one. The new building has cost about \$50,000." (*The Register and Leader*, July 22, 1906) A 1911 history of Des Moines features an engraving of the new Harbach complex, which corresponds to the 1920 Sanborn map: warehouse and factory connect in the center to a non-extant small, narrow three-story building used for manufacturing at first, and then warehousing per the 1920 Sanborn. The factory building remains much as it was when constructed; the warehouse was adapted before 1950 by long-time tenant and later owner Ginsberg's furniture company to accommodate truck loading via the addition of a midcentury truck well with three truck garage door bays on the façade. Both buildings clearly reflect their original purpose as early twentieth century Warehouse and Factory Complex, and the warehouse also reflects the continued evolution of warehousing during the twentieth century with the addition of the truck well. The continued use and ownership by three important furniture companies in Des Moines testifies to the importance of these buildings to local furniture-related industry and commerce.

Circa 1920, three of the four Harbach sons retired from active management of the company; they sold shares in the L. Harbach's Sons Co. to the tenant of their former retail store, the Davidson brothers' furniture company; this may have been a sale over time or outright. (Abstract) The Davidsons operated the Harbach business under the Harbach name, just as new owners of the Harbach undertaking business operated under the Harbach name—a brand name with long-established customer loyalty. (Halstead) Known as one of Iowa's pioneer Jewish immigrant furniture families, the Davidson elder brother Saul emigrated from Lithuania to peddle goods. He transitioned to owning a second-hand store, brought on his brothers, and together they created one of the leading Midwestern furniture concerns with large branch stores in several states as of the 1920s: Waterloo, Iowa; Kansas City, Missouri; Rock Island, Illinois, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. (*Des Moines Sunday Register*, January 25, 1925; *Des Moines Register*, July 2, 1928) The Davidson family operated L. Harbach & Sons Co. through 1928 and retained ownership of the Warehouse and Factory Complex until 1952. (Abstract) In spring 1928, Davidsons advertised: "Davidsons gigantic purchase of L. Harbach & Sons' wholesale furniture stock must be disposed of quickly.... Sold to Davidsons." (*Kansas City Star*, April 29, 1928)

By 1929, the Davidsons leased or sold the furniture Warehouse and Factory Complex to the furniture and mattress manufacturing and jobbing company Way-Helms Co. / Red Cross Mattress (a branch or extension

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of the main Boston-area based Red Cross Mattress company). The Davidsons stores carried Red Cross mattresses, demonstrating a link between the firms. Way-Helms Co. and Red Cross Mattress (Des Moines) operated only briefly; the fall 1929 stock crash and subsequent Great Depression may have cut short this firm. (Wolfe: 77-81; Abstract of Title; *Waterloo Evening Courier*, June 26, 1925)

Beginning in the early 1930s, the Davidsons' real estate company leased the warehouse building to another fellow European Jewish immigrant furniture mercantile family, the Ginsbergs. Louis (L.) Ginsberg left Poland for the United States as a young man and opened in 1888 a new and used home furnishings store; in 1925 the store advertised its 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary. (*Des Moines Sunday Register*, April 12, 1925) Sons Harry, Sol, I.D., and Herman worked for their father and then continued the business after their father's tragic, headline-making suicide in autumn 1925. (*The Davenport Democrat and Leader*, October 5, 1925) The Ginsbergs followed in the footsteps of the Davidsons, opening a store on Walnut Street and later adding a second location in a former Davidsons location in Waterloo in 1929, the first of several planned store expansions—but the Great Depression cut short that operation and further expansion plans. Ginsberg's occupied more than one warehouse through the years, but came to call 300 SW Fifth Street "Ginsberg's No. 1 Warehouse." The retail store advertised a discount for customers who picked up their own goods from the warehouse, and also advertised special sales with goods culled from warehouse stocks. (Wolfe: 75-76; Long; typical Ginsberg's advertisements, such as *Des Moines Register*, October 8, 1972: 12 and July 16, 1976: 8)

*History of L. Harbach & Sons Company and SW Fifth Street Warehouse and Factory Complex*

Louis Harbach (1838-1916) was born in Germany, emigrated in the early 1850s, and arrived in Des Moines in 1858. He joined his older brother Christian in furniture manufacturing and undertaking as C. & L. Harbach in 1860, handcrafting pieces from native woods from a small shop on Court Avenue. Christian retired in 1878. By 1880, Louis' firm was noted as "[t]he oldest and largest furniture establishment in the city," and "the largest and most extensive in the state," generating some \$125,000 in retail sales annually with wholesale operations generating \$100,000 per year. Harbach's operations in 1880 included a large 4-story retail store on West Third Street, another building on West Third Street dedicated to undertaker's supplies, a four-story building on Second Street for wholesale trade, and another Second Street building devoted to manufacturing and repairs. The 1880 profile of Harbach notes that "goods are mostly purchased of manufacturers in unfinished or 'knock-down' shape, and finished or upholstered here, giving employment to a large number of men. The Kirkwood [hotel], the Aborn [hotel], the churches and most elegantly furnished residences in the city attest the skill and elaborateness of the establishment." (Louis Harbach 1880: 716-717; 815-816; Halstead: 12)

In an 1895 promotional book on Des Moines, the L. Harbach firm was noted for "both wholesale and retail business in furniture, carpets and draperies, their wholesale business extending throughout the State and into several of the bordering states. They also do a large business in furnishing undertaker's supplies and wood mantels.... The retail building... is the largest retail furniture store in the State." Louis Harbach's fulfillment of the contract for furnishing the state capitol, awarded in 1879 and undertaken over several years, is noted as important in establishing the firm's reputation for high quality craftsmanship of rich interior



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finishes and furnishings—and for spurring the 1884 construction of the four-story manufacturing building at Sixth and Vine streets (nonextant). An in-depth 1898 newspaper story about L. Harbach & Sons businesses called Louis Harbach a statewide pioneer of furniture manufacturing, “among the pillars and cornerstones of commercial activity,” employing “an army” of at least 100 employees (including his four sons) in manufacturing furniture, retail furniture sales, wholesale operations, warehouse operations, and undertaking parlor. The 1894 three-story wholesale house, on Locust Street near the river (nonextant), 1886 six-story retail store on Walnut Street (nonextant), warehouse on Second Street (nonextant), and undertaking parlor on Second Street (nonextant) made up the 1898 operations. The company’s buildings were noted as “only a part of the many owned by Mr. Harbach, which are located in different parts of the city.” (Wilcox: 228-229) Louis Harbach’s interest in real estate is further noted in the 1898 article, which credits him as the one to “set the pace” in constructing ever taller commercial buildings in Des Moines: “Mr. Harbach was the first capitalist in the city that introduced high buildings. He built the first four-, five-, and six-story buildings in the city.” (*Des Moines Daily News*, August 30, 1898) The elder Harbach was a founder and first president in 1888 of the Commerce Exchange (forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce), served as a long-time director of the Des Moines Savings Bank and Valley Savings, and served on the City of Des Moines parks board, during which time he conceived of an expanded public parks system. (Brigham: 529, 530, 570)

The L. Harbach firm and Louis Harbach continued to acquire real estate and build new construction, with the SW Fifth Street factory and warehouse being one of the last major projects undertaken by Louis Harbach before his death in 1916—and rare surviving examples of his and his son’s real estate development work. In the 1905 city directory, Louis Harbach wholesale furniture and manufacturing was located at 112, 114, 116 Locust Street (nonextant) and northeast corner of Sixth and Vine streets (nonextant). The new Warehouse and Factory Complex consolidated Harbach manufacturing and warehouse operations in new modern facilities with coordinated rail trackage for convenient freight deliveries of raw materials and freight exports of completed goods.

Plans for the new factory and warehouse were first made public in December 1904, at the same time it was announced the company would close its L. Harbach retail furniture store, 412-414 Walnut Street (nonextant). Newspaper coverage detailed the planned retirement of the senior Louis Harbach and the intent of the four sons to devote full attention to furniture manufacturing and jobbing. In December it was announced that operations would be centralized and expanded at the existing factory and jobbing plant, West Sixth and Wagner (Vine?) streets (nonextant). The retirement of L. Harbach generated positive press coverage of his career, such as the following:

Since he embarked in the furniture business in Des Moines in 1856, Mr. L. Harbach, the venerable head of the firm, has maintained standards of quality and dealing that have kept his store at the front through half a century of the comings and goings of furniture men. The Harbach store has been in the [vanguard?] in the march of real estate improvement and property growth in the city.... Transfers of furniture stores from one owner to another are not uncommon.... But the absolute abandonment of the retail field by an old established and successful firm is an event of a lifetime. (*Des Moines Capital*, December 6, 1904: 6; note that the text of the original newspaper article is poorly printed and thus some words are difficult to make out)



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A contemporaneous newspaper story announced that an unnamed tenant—revealed soon after as S. Davidson & Bros., People's Furniture Store—would lease the six-story, 45-foot-wide L. Harbach retail store for a record-high \$40,000 in projected rentals over the next five years. (*Des Moines Capital*, December 4, 1904) This relationship with the Davidson furniture family would continue, with the firm leasing additional space from the Harbachs and eventually purchasing the Warehouse and Factory Complex in the 1920s.

In January 1905, it was announced that the Harbach family would construct a new Warehouse and Factory Complex on SW Fifth Street (then called South Fifth Street), and that construction would be coordinated with the extension of a levee constructed farther west by F.M. Hubbell to protect the "immense factory district along the 'Coon River.'" The *Des Moines Capital* reported:

The movement [started?] at the last meeting of the city council to establish a grade along West Fifth street to protect the factory district from overflow has given new hope to factory owners. The proposition to fix a grade between the Fifth street bridge and Elm street came from the Harbach Furniture company, who are drawing up plans for a large factory which they expect to build on their lands in the district.... A proposition has been made by the Harbach Furniture company to [gift?] to the city of Des Moines earth moved in excavating for the new factory to be used in bringing this street to grade. Representatives of the firm said this morning that it is their hope that a paved street will be made along the new grade and that new and large residences will take the place of the little huts now scattered about there. (*Des Moines Capital*, January 25, 1905; note that the text of the original newspaper article is poorly printed and thus some words are difficult to make out)

One of the existing factories within the flood-prone factory district was Des Moines' other furniture manufacturing firm, Schmitt and Henry, which constructed a series of smaller buildings of three and four stories between 1901 and 1914 on land leased from F.M. Hubbell, who replatted the area as Factory Addition. Although the Harbach factory complex was begun after the Schmitt project, Harbach sons L.E. and W.C. Harbach began in 1893 assembling land on which the new factory and warehouse were built; the brothers purchased two parcels (Lots 12 and 13) and retained the small frame houses on them. In August 1905, the sons conveyed their interest in the two lots to their father, L. Harbach, who purchased the third parcel (Lot 14).

In September 1905, the *Des Moines Capital* dedicated a full page to a building and construction report, which listed at the top: "Among the more important business structures are the following... Two five-story warehouses, each 132 by 132, for Harbach Furniture Co." The listed dimensions are larger than the existing buildings and may indicate plans were modified. (*Des Moines Capital*, September 6, 1905) The factory building was constructed "short" of the rear lot line to accommodate rail trackage owned by the Rock Island Railroad. A January 1905 *Des Moines Capital* story reported that the Rock Island Road had acquired property along its tracks on the west part of the city and would rent land at low rates to companies wishing to establish warehouses or factories that would be freight producers. "Its first notable contract is with L. Harbach & Sons, who will occupy a part of the recent acquisitions of the company for a long term of years." (*Des Moines Capital*, January 26, 1905) (The 300 and 316 SW Fifth Street Abstracts of Title list no

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agreements or otherwise with any railroad). Rail transport within the factory district was an important amenity for factory and warehouse tenants and owners, and an important business aspect for railroads. A July 1906 article states that the Factory Addition developer, F.M. Hubbell, "is planning to build a railroad for handling freight up South Fifth Street as far as the Harbach factory, and the right of way was obtained from all the property owners except Miss Burke. In vane, the capitalists [Hubbell and the Harbachs] tried to persuade her to give her consent, but the lady was obdurate. Finally, as the only way out of the situation, Mr. Hubbell bought the lot outright from her, paying \$2,500 for it." (*Des Moines Daily News*: July 25, 1906)

More detailed construction information appeared in an October 1906 furniture journal, which may have been printed after construction was complete:

L. Harbach, Des Moines, Ia., is erecting a factory 70 by 120 feet, five stories and basement, cement construction, and a warehouse 88 by 132 feet, five stories and basement. Mr. Harbach writes us that he will make parlor furniture, couches and all kinds of mattresses. A part of the machinery from the old buildings now being torn down will be used in the new plant and the new machinery needed has been purchased. (*Wood Craft*, October 1906: 29)

No architect/firm was specified. A 1906 *Midwestern* magazine story about the noted Des Moines architecture firm Liebke, Nourse & Rasmussen listed an L. Harbach warehouse at Fifth and Vine streets as being one of the firm's works; it is possible that this firm designed the 1906 factory-warehouse complex. (*The Midwestern*, "A Trio of Architects," October 1906) Once constructed, Sanborn maps show that the L. Harbach's Sons Co. five-story buildings were the tallest south of the railroad tracks (south of Vine Street) and within what would become the Factory Addition replat by real estate and insurance mogul F.M. Hubbell. Much of the Factory Addition land was still frame housing. This per examination of the color 1906 block-line map of the central business district—which only shows building footprints, building materials, and number of stories; as noted by other historians, this map appears to show data as of 1905. A rail line was installed in the alley behind circa 1907.

In 1907, L. Harbach conveyed the three lots to the newly created L. Harbach's Sons Company, a corporation. The incorporators, father L. Harbach and sons L.E. and W.C. Harbach, established \$200,000 in capital stock and defined the nature of business as: "Manufacture and sale of all kinds of furniture and fixtures and all other articles incident to or usually connected with a wholesale or retail furniture store and factory...." (Abstract) In 1907 and 1908, the firm advertised that it made Monarch-brand mattresses and upholstered furniture, employing 50 workers. "If every home in Des Moines was furnished with Des Moines-made furniture, the Harbach factory would be three times its present size," the company stated in a "Buy Des Moines" advertising campaign. (*The Des Moines News*, November 11, 1908)

In 1911, L. Harbach included news briefs in several furniture trade journals that it would expand or improve its operations, such as the mention in *American Machinist* that "L. Harbach Furniture Company of Des Moines, Iowa, will make improvements at Fifth and Elm Streets." (*American Machinist*, January 19, 1911) This may indicate the date of construction of a smaller non-extant building constructed between the factory and warehouse. A 1911 history of Des Moines includes an engraving of the "Harbach Furniture Company"

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which shows three buildings as part of the operation: warehouse, "frame shop" (narrow three-story building; non-extant) and factory.

The 1920 Sanborn map, the first to feature the complex, shows L. Harbach's Sons Co. as occupying the same three buildings:

1) 300-306 SW Fifth: The largest building, the brick-veneered five-story furniture warehouse included crating on the first floor. A freight elevator (extant) was located in the center of the plan. A loading court of some sort connected on the south elevation near the rear, and a rail line extended to the loading area. A skybridge, possibly three stories in height and open on the first story, connected on the south elevation to the three-story middle frame shop/stable building (nonextant). A 20,000-gallon water tank on the roof of the warehouse provided fire suppression; the building also had a wet fire sprinkler system.

2) 310 SW Fifth: The smallest building, it was used as a stable or garage with warehouse on second and third floors. Elevated skybridges connected here.

3) 316 SW Fifth: The factory contained an office, carding machine, and mattress factory on the first floor, upholstery and sewing on the second floor, cabinet shop on third floor, and stock (including baled straw and lint cotton) on floors three, four, and five. The factory had a dry sprinkler system. In 1924, thirteen arson fires were set within the factory, causing an estimated \$15,000 in damage, a news item that made newspapers around the state. The fireproof construction and sprinkler system appears to have kept the building standing. (*Davenport Democrat and Leader*, February 27, 1924; *Oelwein Daily Register*, February 26, 1924)

The same 1920 Sanborn also shows a small frame office attached to a house, and built against the southeast corner wall of the Harbach factory under the address of 320 SW Fifth Street. That corner of the factory building is built to the lot line. City directory research is inconclusive regarding this office and whether it was associated with the Harbach complex. Examination of 1915 through 1922 city directories shows the Harbach company as occupying 300-316 SW Fifth Street, and a resident occupying a house at 322 SW Fifth Street (peddler Richard Frain for most of this duration); there is no listing for 320 SW Fifth Street. However, 312 SW Fifth Street, possibly located within the Harbach complex or perhaps located within the house addressed on the Sanborn as 320 SW Fifth Street, is listed as having up to three commercial tenants in the space, including a real estate agent and a barber.

*Harbach Sons:*

Leonard Edward (L.E. aka Len) Harbach Sr. (1870 – 1951) served as president and general manager of L. Harbach's Sons Co. after his father's retirement. During his later years with the furniture company, he also was director of the Century Savings Bank, Iowa National Bank, and president of Interstate Business Men's Accident Insurance Association of Des Moines in the 1910s. (Brigham: 539; *The Western Underwriter*: December 28, 1916) Civically in the early twentieth century he led city planning and beautification efforts as



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the appointed chairman of the Civic Improvement Committee. Charged with creating a new civic center along the river to beautify and remove blight, L.E. Harbach selected and oversaw a committee of architects, engineers, and businessmen to conceive of and execute the new government corridor with an extensive boulevard system encircling it. (NRHP, Civic Center Historic District, 1988) Under Harbach's direction, the group also secured playgrounds and coordinated with the city's Park Department to improve public parks. An active Rotarian, Len Harbach's civic work was lauded by *The Rotarian* magazine. (*The Rotarian*, August 1915; *Des Moines Register*, May 14, 1951) He also served as a vice president of the Commercial Club, a precursor to the Chamber of Commerce. In 1920, Len Harbach was mentioned as a possible mayoral candidate. (*Des Moines Capital*, February 1, 1920) He retired from the family company by 1921, and moved to California by 1923, according to his U.S. passport applications. (Ancestry.com) He engaged in banking in California, where he remained until his death. (*Des Moines Register*, May 14, 1951)

William Christian (W.C.) Harbach (1868 – 1939) served as secretary and treasurer of the L. Harbach's Sons Co. William Harbach also managed the retail and wholesale funeral operations, launching the wholesale undertaking supply family business in 1893 and overseeing the 1916 state-of-the-art mortuary building that included funeral chapel, amphitheater-style preparation room, crematory, garages, wholesale business, and Hohenschuh-Carpenter School of Embalming. (The Harbachs eventually hired a funeral director to manage day-to-day operations.) William Harbach's outside business involvements included director of Valley National Bank, Iowa National Bank, and Atlas Insurance Company; and treasurer of Falcon Milling Company in the 1910s and 1920s; he served on the city's library commission in the early 1900s. (Halstead: 17; *Des Moines Capital*, December 6, 1904; *Des Moines Daily News*, June 18, 1906; city directories) In 1918, William Harbach sold the funeral and wholesale undertaking business to Harry F. Schoen, a banker by trade who would carry on the business under the Harbach name until 1948. (Halstead: 34) Upon his retirement from the L. Harbach furniture business in circa 1920, William Harbach was active in Republican state politics, appointed to a three-man committee in 1922 opposed to Republican Col. Smith W. Brookhart for U.S. Senator. (*Atlantic News Telegraph*, September 26, 1922) Harbach's opposition derailed his 1924 appointment for Des Moines postmaster, advanced by U.S. Senator Albert C. Cummins; Brookhart prevented the confirmation. (*Davenport Democrat & Leader*, May 20, 1924) In 1926, William Harbach announced a new funeral business affiliation with the large LeRoy C. Dunn funeral home; Dunn's had just moved to a new facility constructed by combining William Harbach's and his sister's former mansions west of the central business district. (Halstead: 48, 58) William Harbach continued as a funeral director at Dunn's and bank director until his accidental death in 1939, which made the top headline in the newspaper, superseding the death of two-time Iowa governor Beryl Carroll. (*Des Moines Sunday Register*, December 17, 1939)

George Raymond Harbach (1873 – 1935) headed the manufacturing department and later served as vice-president of L. Harbach's Sons Co. following his father's death. After the brothers sold the wholesale furniture and manufacturing business to the Davidsons circa 1921, George Harbach stayed on as assistant manager and salesman until circa 1928, when the Davidsons exited these businesses. (Housh; city directories; *Des Moines Capital*, December 6, 1904)



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Wilmot Arthur (W.A.) Harbach (1875 – 1943) Wilmot served as secretary and treasurer of the family businesses as well as secretary of Des Moines Life Insurance Company, where his father-in-law, C.E. Rawson, was president and general manager. When the company merged with Chicago-based National Life of the U.S.A., Wilmot Harbach and top officials with the two firms lost lawsuits over purchasing outstanding stock for deflated valuations. (*The Western Underwriter*, October 19, 1916) Wilmot and his family moved to Chicago, where he continued his career in business and stocks and bonds; a 1917 passport application lists his occupation as president of Combusto Sales Corporation, manufacturer of fuel economizers; the 1930 census lists his occupation as broker of stocks and bonds. He returned to Des Moines during the Depression. (Brigham: 517; city directories; Housh; Census; Ancestry.com)

*Significance and History of the Succeeding Furniture Tenants and Owners*

The Davidson family's relationship with the Harbach family has many intersections. The Davidson family had a long-term lease on the former Harbach retail store on Walnut Street and may also have leased the former Harbach factory on Sixth Street for use as a warehouse. Following a similar but different path as German immigrant Louis Harbach, furniture retailer Saul Davidson was a Jewish Lithuanian immigrant who settled in Des Moines to become a peddler for an uncle who owned a peddler's supply business. He opened a secondhand furniture store in 1887, which he developed into a first-class retail operation with his brothers Jacob and Louis as partners; by 1907 the firm had become known for high-quality goods and won contracts to appoint state office interiors, the Polk County Courthouse, and Des Moines Public Library. S. Davidson & Bros., also known as Davidsons, expanded the flagship store, plus moved into additional markets during the first half of the twentieth century, including Mason City, Waterloo, Rock Island, Kansas City, and Minneapolis. (City directories; Abstract of Title; Malino; *The Midwestern*, April 1907: 70; Wolfe; Malino)

Circa 1920 – 1952: The Davidson became part-owners and later full owners of the factory complex. In circa 1920, the Davidson brothers became stockholders in L. Harbach's Sons Company/ L. Harbach & Sons Co., Inc. Capital stock was increased to \$850,000 and powers expanded to purchase, own, lease, and sell real estate; to borrow money and execute its notes or other obligations; to sell, convey, pledge, or mortgage any or all of its property. (Abstract of Title) By 1922 when Louis Davidson, one of the furniture retailing brothers, died at age 36, he owned 1,500 shares of common stock in L. Harbach & Sons Co., Inc. (Abstract of Title) City directory and passport applications show that circa 1920, L.C. Harbach and W.C. Harbach retired from furniture operations, and Davidsons manager John J. Gary became the general manager of the Harbach wholesale and factory operations. (City directories; U.S. passport applications) One of the Harbach brothers, George, continued on as assistant manager and salesman of L. Harbach & Sons through circa 1928. (City directories) In 1928, Davidsons held widely advertised sales of L. Harbach wholesale furnishings, stating that Davidsons had bought out the company and was liquidating the warehouse holdings. (Typical advertisement, *Kansas City Star*, April 29, 1928) In July 1929, the Davidson brothers J. and H. transferred L. Harbach's Sons Co. assets to the new Davidson Building Company. Heirs would continue to own the building until 1952.

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Circa 1928 – 1930: Davidson Building Co. leased the Warehouse and Factory Complex including machinery to Way-Helms Co. and Red Cross Mattress Co., which operated upholstered furniture manufacturing and mattress and furniture jobbing out of the factory building, 316 SW Fifth Street, and Way-Helms Storage Co. out of 300 SW Fifth Street. Sales manager Sidney Helms was a standout Iowa mattress salesman whose 1925 stunt of riding down the Mississippi River on a Red Cross-brand mattress earned him fame and speaking engagements throughout the Midwest. Red Cross mattresses were based in the Boston, Massachusetts, area. Davidsons carried Red Cross mattresses in the 1920s. Way-Helms Co.'s manufacturing and jobbing promise may have been cut short by the stock market crash. By the 1930 city directory, the factory was vacant and the warehouse occupied by L. Ginsberg & Sons wholesale operations. (City directories; *Nashua Reporter*, April 6, 1927; *Waterloo Evening Courier*, June 26, 1925)

Circa 1930 – 1985: L. Ginsberg & Sons leased the 300 SW Fifth warehouse, and later the Ginsberg family became owners of the warehouse-factory complex. Ginsberg's was one of the largest furniture firms in Des Moines and statewide, whose downtown flagship retail building is now nonextant. The warehouse was a prominent fixture for Ginsberg's (as the company became known), which painted large advertising signs on the warehouse's north and west elevations that could be seen from various downtown points. L. Ginsberg & Sons wholesale is first listed in the 1930 Des Moines city directory at 300 SW Fifth Street, with occupancy appearing to be continuous from that point onward. Ginsberg family members via Warehouse Corporation purchased the Warehouse and Factory Complex in 1952 from the Davidsons family and continued ownership until 1985. (City directories, Abstract of Title; *Waterloo Evening Courier*, October 11, 1929)

The 1950 Sanborn shows the first floor north third of the building used for furniture repair and upholstery, with warehousing occupying the remainder of space. By 1950, the east elevation truck well has been added; the train well is still evident in the rear first floor. Another change by 1950: the second freight elevator had been added to the south wall. The loading courtyard is open (three-story brick building removed), allowing loading and unloading from the south freight elevator's exterior doors.

*Other Owners and Tenants*

300 SW Fifth Street:

- Ahern-Pershing: Purchased building from Ginsberg warehouse company by 1986. The office supplies and equipment company used the warehouse to its sales showroom, offices, and warehouse for office supplies and equipment.
- JG's Old Furniture Systems: Tenant who moved out in spring 2015 bought, sold, and repaired new and used office furniture on the premises, as well as provided moving services.

314-316 SW Fifth Street:

Under the ownership of Davidson and Ginsberg families, through 1965:

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- Cohen Bros. Iron and Metal Co. Inc. yard: The company was based across the street (301-307 SW Fifth Street) and leased 314-316 SW Fifth Street at various times during the 1930s, per references in the 1931 1935, and 1939 city directories.
- Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. office and Atlantic Commission Co.: This grocery retailer had a large warehouse down the block (338 SW Fifth Street) with bakery facilities. It leased space for \$7,200 a year beginning at least in 1942, with a listing here in the 1946 city directory. The Personnel Department was located at this address as of 1944. (*The Algona Upper Des Moines*, March 7, 1944; Abstract of Title)
- Montgomery Ward Co. wholesale: This retail giant leased space beginning in 1947 for at least a decade, with city directory listings from 1949 to 1958; the Abstract of Title specified that the lease to Montgomery Ward was still in effect in 1966. (Rent in 1947 was set at \$900 per month.)
- Modern era ownership:
  - Volunteers of America, Inc.: 1966 until spring 1969.
  - A.A. Schneiderhahn Co.: 1969 until 1979 (electrical appliances company based across the street)
  - Charles and Anne Irvine: 1979 through 1988.
  - DKD Investments: 1988 through 1994.
  - Sanders Development, L.C.: 1994 through early 2015.

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**9. Major Bibliographical Sources**

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*American Machinist*, "General Manufacturing," Vol. 34, January 19, 1911: 139.

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*Atlantic News Telegraph*, "Pitt Heads Move Against Brookhart," September 26, 1922: 6.

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*Davenport Democrat and Leader*

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"Harbach Is Beaten for Postmaster," May 20, 1924: 13.

"Leaps to Death at Blackhawk [Hotel]: Prominent Des Moines Merchant Jumps from Ninth Floor: Louis Ginsberg Seeks Death as Relief from a Nervous Disorder," October 5, 1925: 1.

*Des Moines Capital*

"New Lease Touches High Water Mark: Provides for a Gross Rental of \$6,000 a Year," December 4, 1904: 6.

"Harbachs Will Quit Retailing of Furniture," December 6, 1904: 6.

"Rock Island Road Wants Industries," January 26, 1905: 8.

"5<sup>th</sup> St. Levee Seems Assured," January 25, 1905: 3.

"Builders & Contractors," September 6, 1905: 12.

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*Des Moines Daily News*

"Furniture Manufactory. L. Harbach Was the First to Introduce It in the State of Iowa," August 30, 1898: 16.

Manufacturing report, July 16, 1903, as cited in Jacobsen: 8-8

"Mayor Appoints Library Trustees," June 18, 1906: 1.

"Hits Negro with Shovel," July 2, 1906: 3.

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"Accident Fatal to W.C. Harbach," December 17, 1939: 1.

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Isaacson, Richard W. Informant interview May 27, 2014, conducted during a tour of the Harbach furniture warehouse, 300 SW Fifth Street. Isaacson co-owned the building from 1986 to 1996; Ricon L.L.C now owns the building. He co-owns a small strip of former railroad trackage behind the Harbach factory building, 316 SW Fifth Street.

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"Louis Harbach," *Portrait and Biographical Album of Polk County, Iowa*. Chicago: Lake City Publishing Co. 1890: 628-629. (Louis Harbach 1890)

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"A Trio of Architects," October 1906: 70-71.

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*Nashua Reporter*, "Sidney Helms Weds at LB.: Man Who Rode Mattress Down the Mississippi 200 Miles Wed at Brown Church Sunday," April 6, 1927: 1.

*Oelwein Daily Register*, "Youth Charged with Starting 13 Fires," February 26, 1924: 1.

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Sanders, Davis, AIA. Informant interview May 27, 2014, conducted during a tour of the Harbach factory building, 316 SW Fifth Street. Sanders has owned the building and loading dock courtyard since 1991, first with a group of investors and then through Sanders Development L.C.

U.S. passport applications for the Harbach brothers, various years. <Available online from Ancestry.com>

*Waterloo Evening Courier*

Davidsons Red Cross mattress ad, June 26, 1925: 5.

"Ginsberg & Sons Lease Building for Store Here," October 11, 1929: 23.

*The Western Underwriter:*

"Full Amount Is Received: Officials in Old Des Moines Life and National Life, U.S.A., Lose in Suit," October 19, 1916: 15.

"In the Accident Field: Becomes a Stock Company: Interstate Business Men's of Des Moines Reorganized with \$100,000 Capital," December 28, 1916: 22.

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**10. Geographical Data**

Verbal Boundary Description:

Lots 12, 13, and 14, currently divided as -EX E 43.86F W 66.86F N 12.7F- S 43.73F LT 13 & E 120F LT 14  
FACTORY ADDITION, LOT 12 & N 22.5F LOT 13 REPLAT OF PART OF FACTORY ADDITION, and  
-EX E 120F- LOT 14 REPLAT OF PART OF FACTORY ADDITION

Boundary Justification

The factory complex was historically associated with these parcels.

**11. Property Owners:**

300 - 316 SW Fifth Street: LOT 12 & N 22.5F LOT 13 REPLAT OF PART OF FACTORY ADDITION and -  
EX E 43.86F W 66.86F N 12.7F- S 43.73F LT 13 & E 120F LT 14 FACTORY ADDITION:

Harbach Lofts, LLC

Mailing address:

c/o Kent Mauck

3822 Greenwood Drive

Des Moines, IA 50312-2820

Narrow sliver of former railroad trackage behind 316 SW Fifth Street: -EX E 120F- LOT 14 REPLAT OF  
PART OF FACTORY ADDITION

Richard W. and Connie L. Isaacson

3660 Grand Ave Unit 540

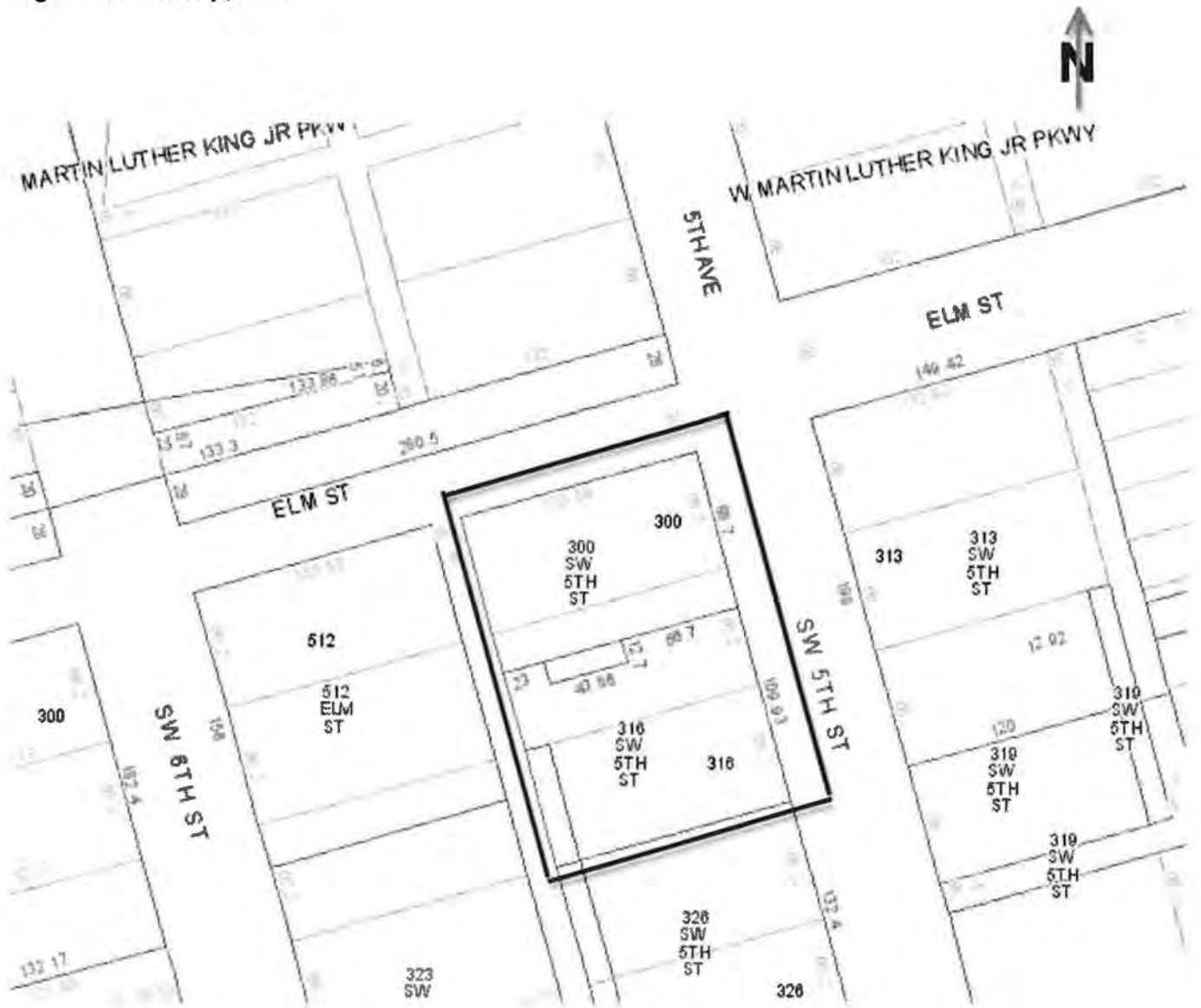
Des Moines, IA 50312

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**Images**  
**Figure 1: Plat map, 2014**



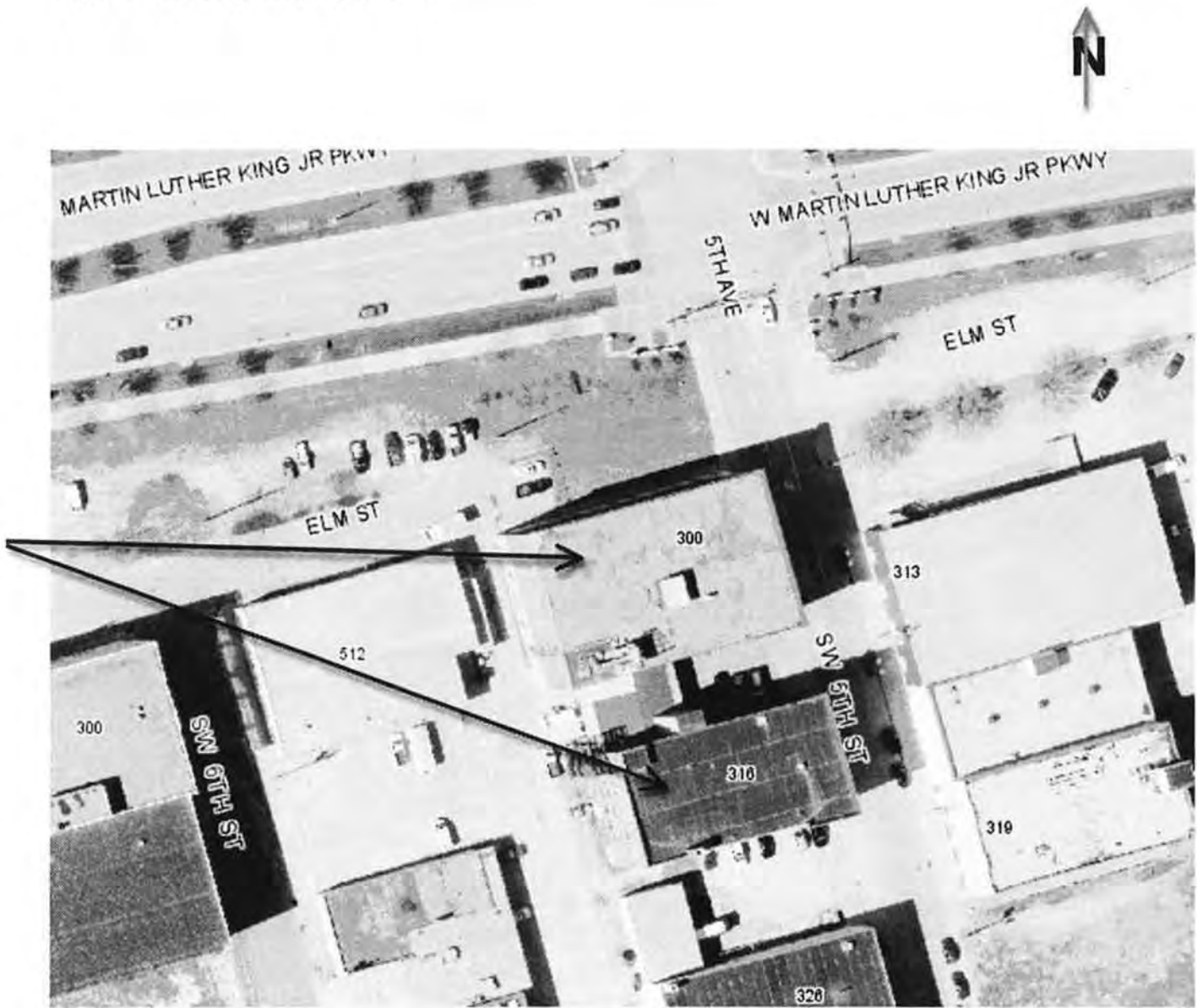
Polk County Assessor's Office.

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Figure 2: Aerial photograph, 2013



Polk County Assessor's Office.

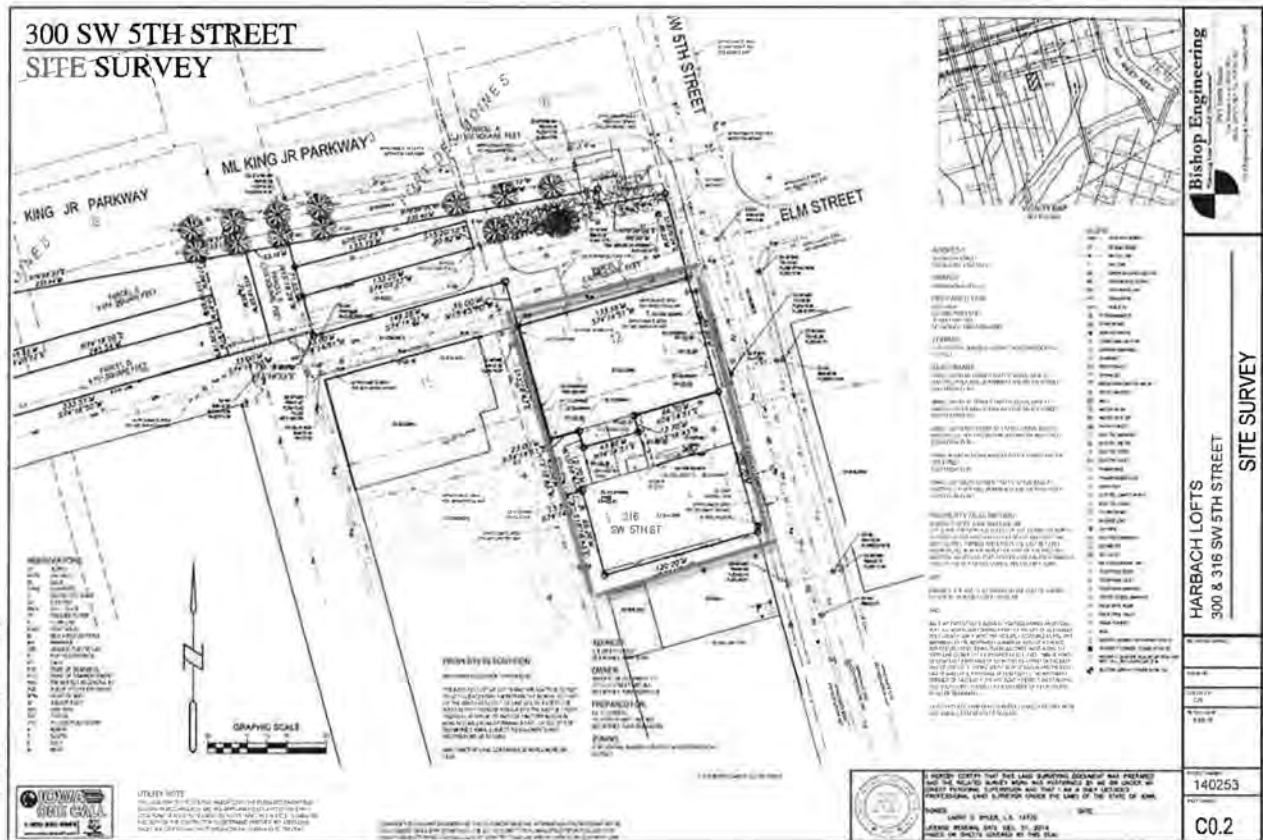


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Figure 3: Site map, 2015



Bishop Engineering. North arrow is integrated into site map. Gray box outlines the 300-316 SW Fifth Street site.

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**Figure 4: Historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1906 detail**



Library of Congress

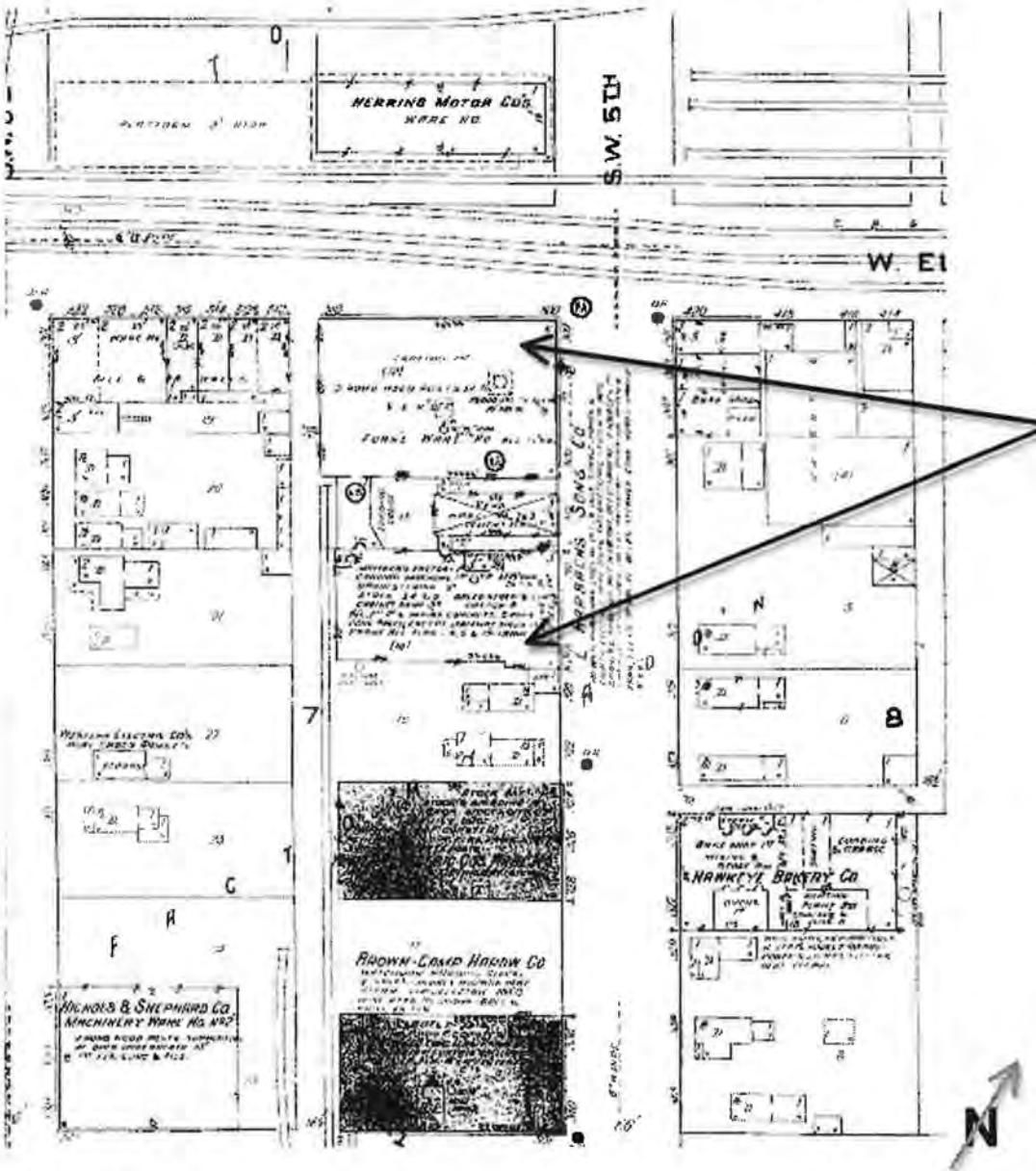
Future site of L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex. Small houses occupy the area. The map appears to incorporate 1905 data. The north arrow is integrated into the map.

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Figure 5B: Historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1920 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Street detail



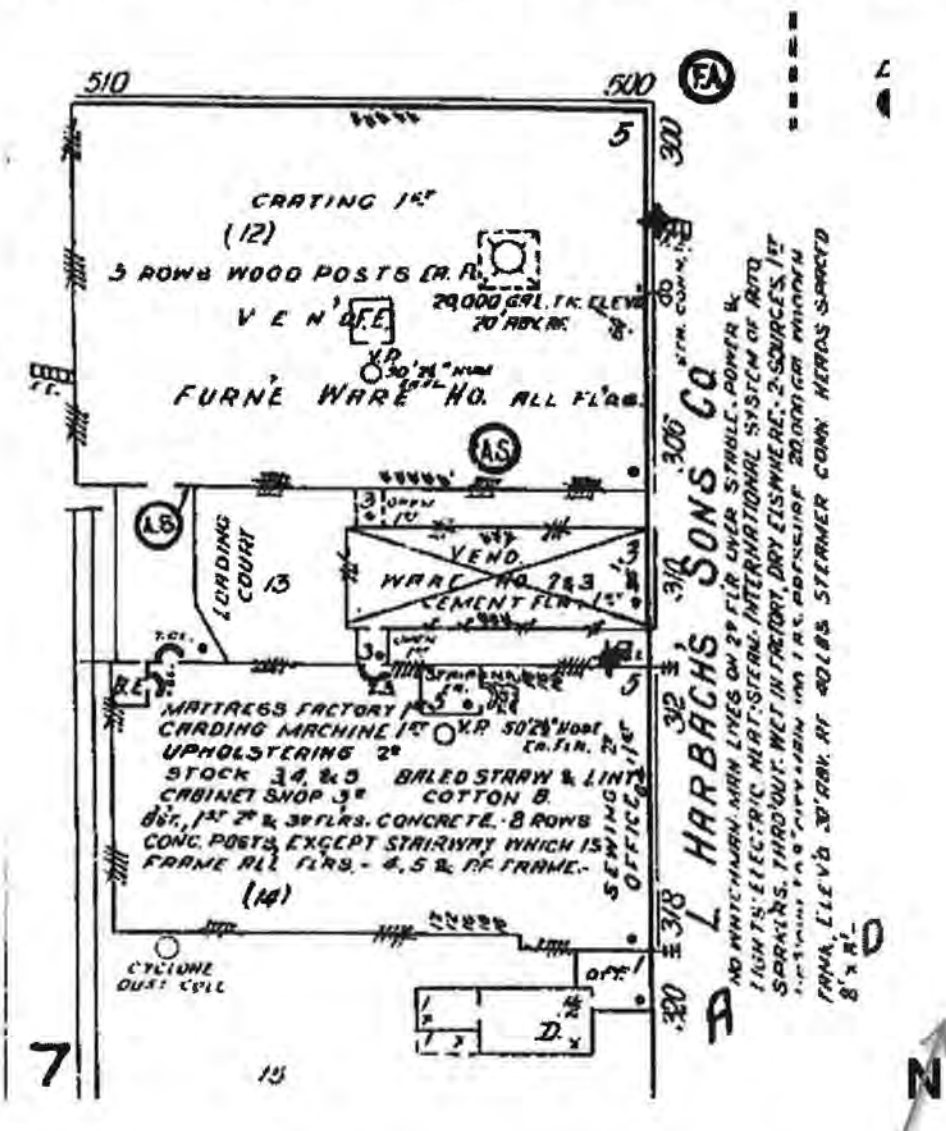
The two arrows point to the Harbach factory-warehouse complex. Note the retention of housing amidst new industrial buildings.

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Figure 5B: Historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1920 Harbach complex detail



Note the middle lot between factory and warehouse, with "loading court" to rear and narrow three-story building with skybridge connections.

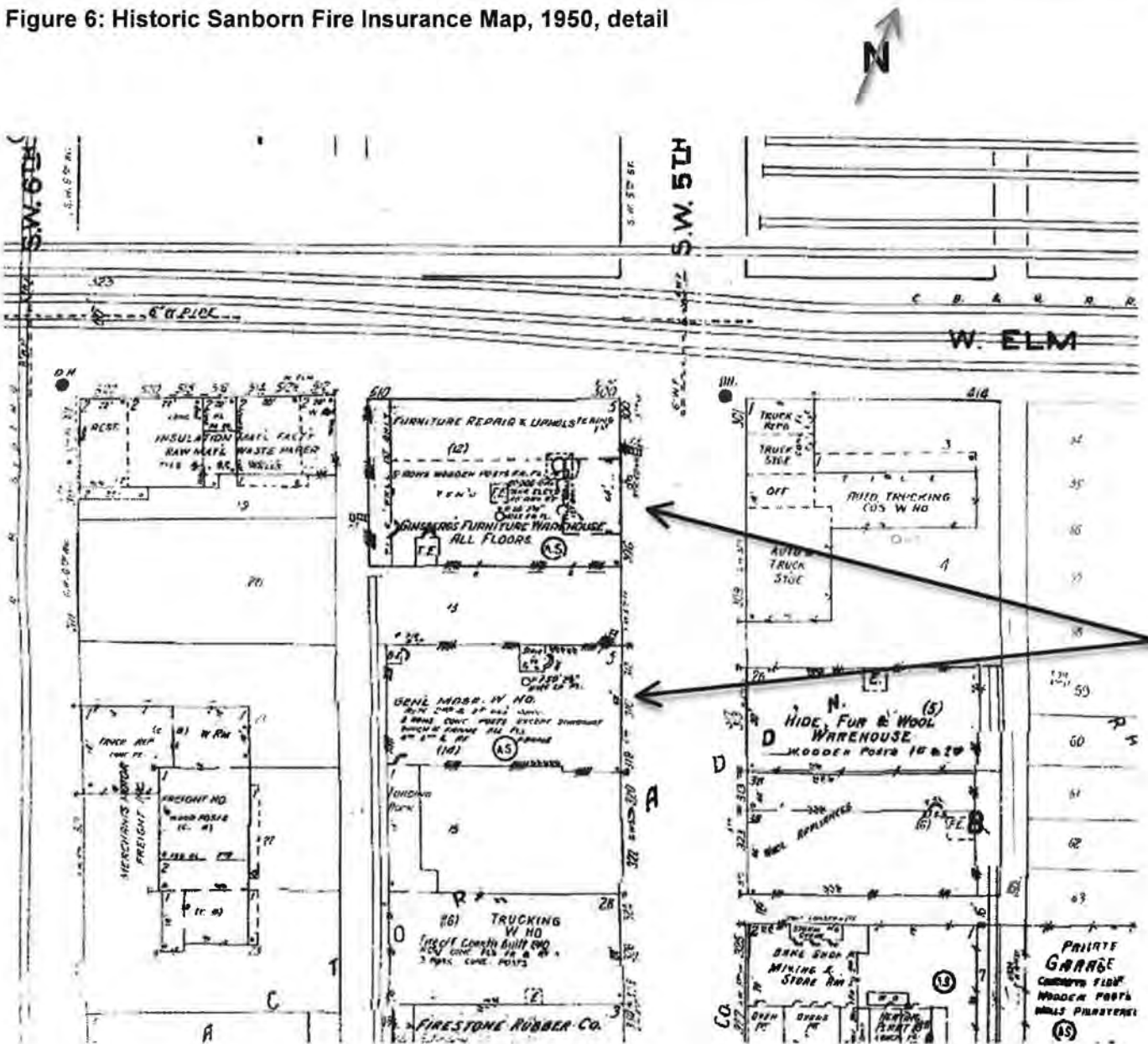


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Figure 6: Historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950, detail



Note open middle lot between factory and warehouse, to allow loading access. All houses have been removed by this time.

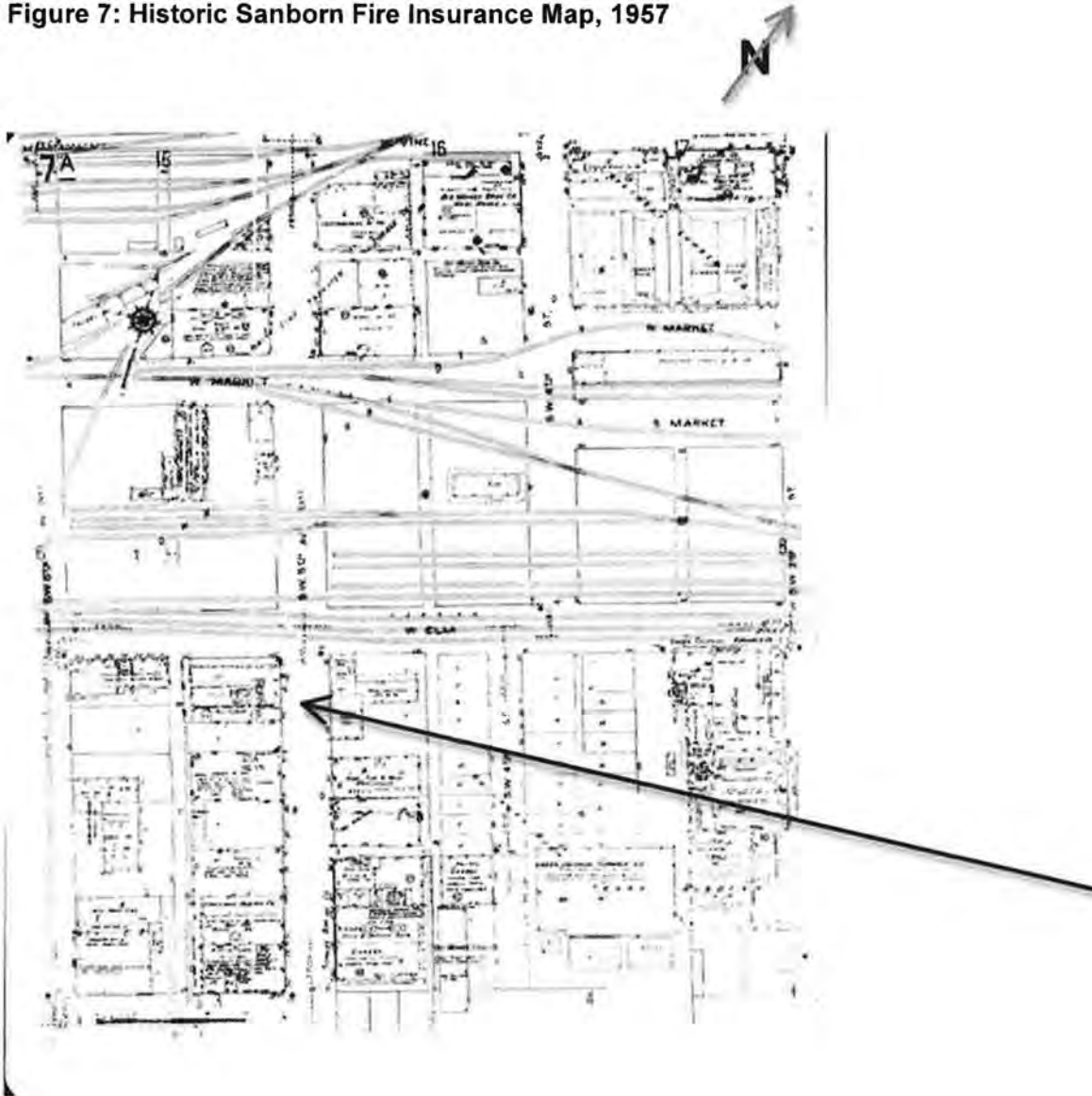
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Figure 7: Historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1957



The 1957 Sanborn view is the same as 1950 for this parcel. Note mix of open and developed land in the surrounding plat.

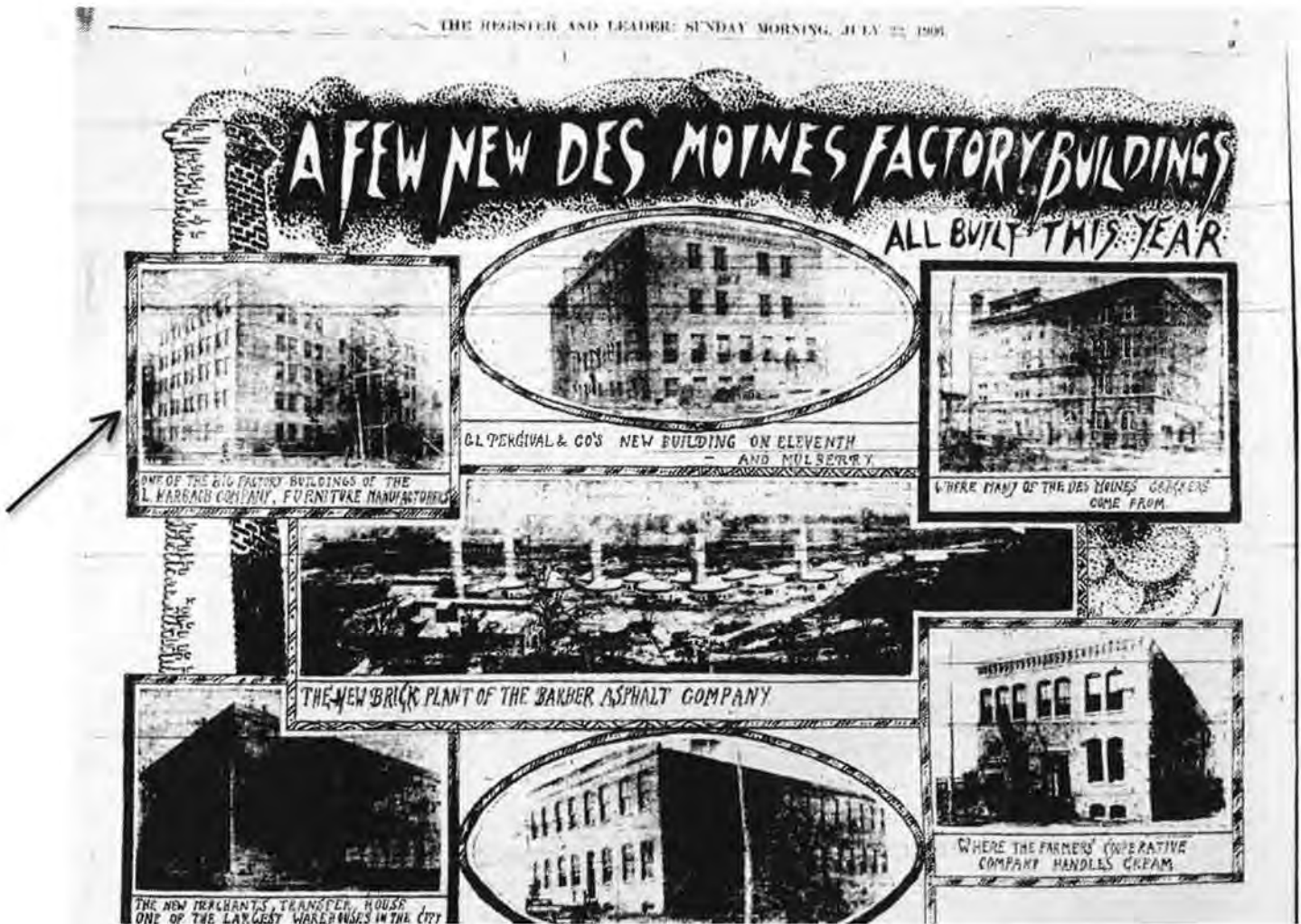
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Figure 8: Factory construction, 1906



The Register and Leader, July 22, 1906: 9.

“One of the big factory buildings of the L. Harbach Company, furniture manufacturers.”

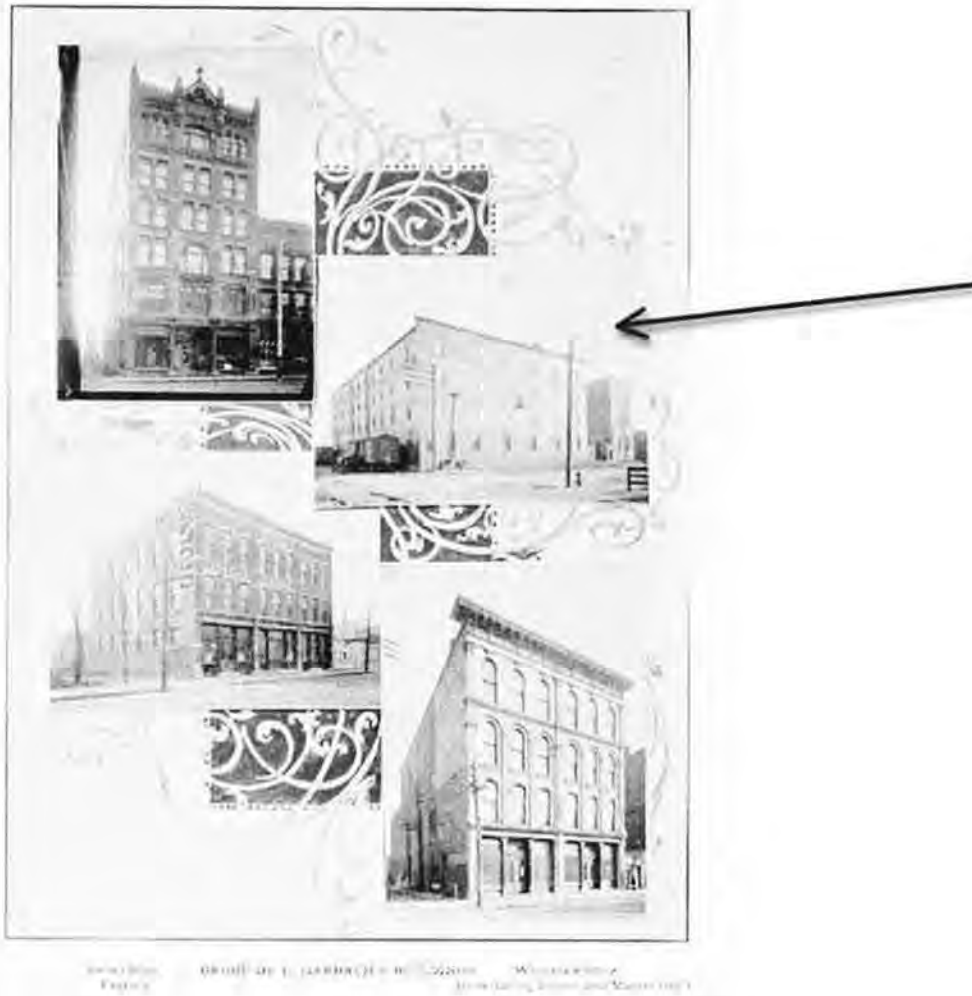
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**Figure 9: Former Harbach factory and other holdings, 1895**



Wilcox, Charles F. manager. *Des Moines Illustrated Souvenir*. Des Moines: Iowa Historical Illustrative Co., 1895: n.p.

The former factory building at Sixth and Vine streets (arrow) looks similar to the 1906 factory, but is four stories in height with different brick and window treatments. Captions for the other buildings read: retail store, wholesale store, and undertaking rooms and mantel department.

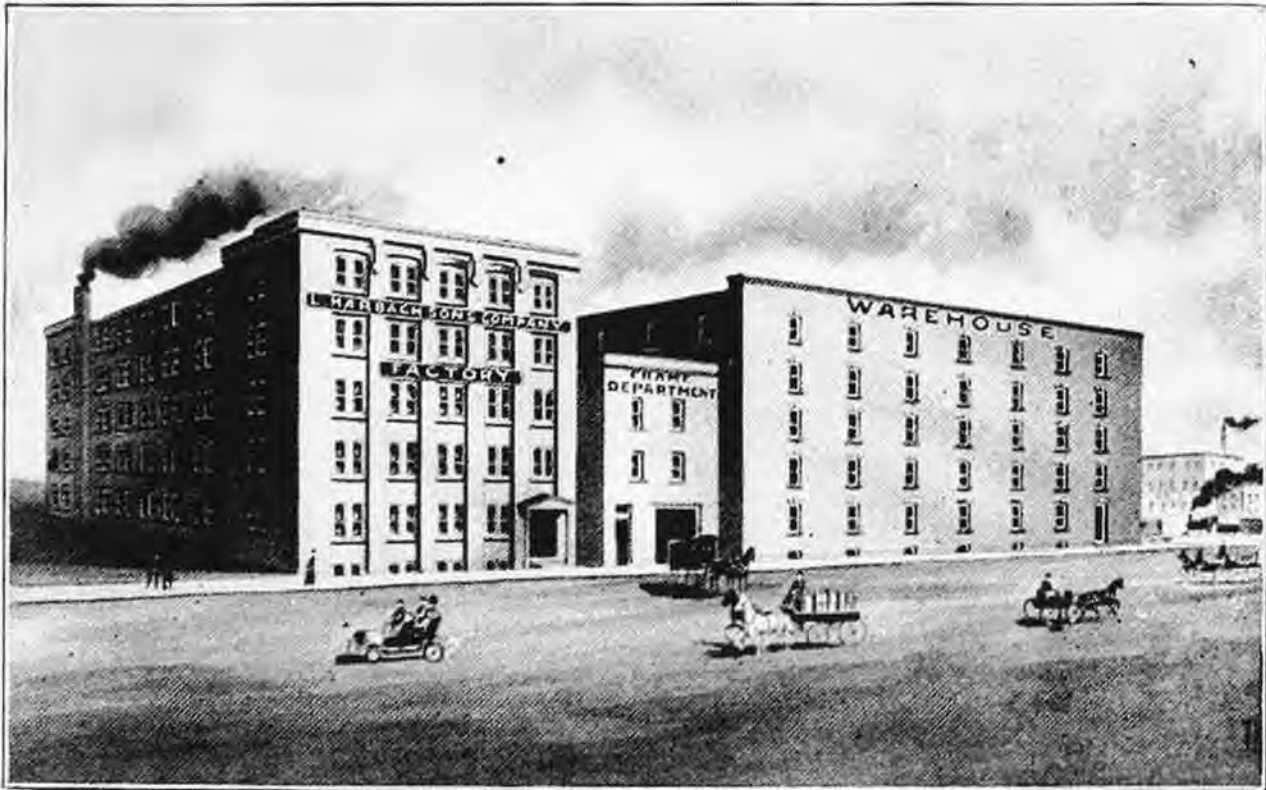


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Section Images Page 39 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

Figure 10: Harbach Furniture Company Warehouse and Factory Complex, 1911



HARBACH FURNITURE COMPANY

Brigham, Johnson. *Des Moines: The Pioneer of Municipal Progress and Reform of the Middle West: Together with the History of Polk County, Iowa, the Largest, Most Populous and Most Prosperous County in the State of Iowa, Volume 1*. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1911: 273.

This quite accurate drawing of the corner warehouse and factory building includes the middle building, which was removed before the 1950 Sanborn map was drawn. Note the façade of the warehouse, before its pre-1950 truck well garage doors were added. No architect has been identified, but it is likely the work of a Des Moines firm.

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Section Images Page 40 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
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Figure 11: Davidsons liquidation of L. Harbach & Sons wholesale stock, 1928 detail

**Davidsons Gigantic Purchase of L. Harbach & Sons' Wholesale Furniture Stock Must Be Dis-**

**posed of Quickly...Floors Now Overcrowded ~**

**Values**

**s—Whole-Manufacturers of Furniture Since 1862**

**Quantities Sufficient in Most Instances**

**SOLD To DAVIDSONS**

*Look for the Orange Sale Tags*

**Everything in this Wholesale Furniture Stock Priced for**

Typical Davidsons advertisements in spring 1928, *Kansas City Star*, April 29, 1928: 5C.

This quite accurate drawing of the corner warehouse and factory building excludes the middle building (or open loading area). Note details including concrete brick first story (white), window trim, water tower, downspouts, and fire escapes.

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Continuation Sheet**

**Section** Images **Page** 41 **Property name** L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
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**Figure 12: Factory building, 316 SW Fifth Street, circa 1992**



From the collection of Davis Sanders, AIA

Note metal infill panels covering windows (arrow); looking southwest at east and north elevation.

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Section Images Page 42 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
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**Figure 13: Warehouse, 300 SW Fifth Street, 1983**



Barbara Beving Long, State Historic Preservation Office

East and north elevations, taken looking southwest. Note the two different styles of windows: double hung in upper stories and multi-pane (double-hung) in first-story window openings. East door has been infilled (right arrow) into a window. Note presence of Ginsberg's painted advertising signs on both elevations.



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Section Images Page 43 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

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Figure 14: Warehouse, 300 SW Fifth Street, 2009



Polk County Assessor's Office.

Note Harbach painted sign (arrow); looking west at east elevation.

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Section Images Page 44 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

Figure 15: Warehouse, 300 SW Fifth Street, circa 1960s



Photograph courtesy of John Howard, former Des Moines Union Railroad employee, via Lost Des Moines.

Oral history caption: Harbach-cum-Ginsberg warehouse, "located in the Des Moines Union Ry Switching Factory District. The picture [shows] the north side of the building, with the old CB&Q RR yard just north of the building. The DMU switched cars into the warehouse on the south side of the building; it held two cars that "spotted" inside the building, it was a NO clearance building. In order to spot the cars right, there were paint marks on the rail: one for 40-foot cars and [one] for 50-foot cars. Now comes the story you old rails may enjoy: We had about 10 cars. I was on the end car and going to spot them, About 20 feet from the building, the car I was riding on jumped the track. I bailed off and was flapping my arms like a pheasant that just got flushed, giving washout signs to the engineer. I just knew the building was going to come down and it be my last day working on the railroad. The car hit the outside corner, the bricks flew, [but] luck was with me [and] the building did not come down."

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**Section** Images **Page** 45 **Property name** L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
**County and State** Polk County, Iowa

---

**Photograph Log**

Property: L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse and Factory Complex  
City, county, state: Des Moines, Polk County, IA  
Photographer and date: Jennifer James, May 27, 2014  
Location of original digital files: 4209 Kingman Blvd., Des Moines, IA 50311

Photo 1: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0001)  
Warehouse (right) and Factory (left) east and north elevations, camera facing SW.

Photo 2: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0002)  
Factory (left) and Warehouse (right) east and south elevations, camera facing NW.

Photo 3: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0003)  
Warehouse east and south elevations and loading dock, camera facing NW.

Photo 4: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0004)  
Middle loading dock and loading courtyard, camera facing W.

Photo 5: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0005)  
Warehouse south elevation infilled skybridge openings and loading dock, camera facing NW from Factory fourth floor window.

Photo 6: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0006)  
Factory north elevation, camera facing SW.

Photo 7: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0007)  
Factory south elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo 8: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0008)  
Warehouse (left) and factory (right) west and south elevations, camera facing NE.

Photo 9: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0009)  
Warehouse west and south elevations and loading dock, camera facing NE.

Photo 10: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0010)  
Warehouse north and west elevations and public alley, camera facing S.

Photo 11: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0011)  
Warehouse north and west elevations, camera facing SE.

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**Section** Images **Page** 46 **Property name** L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
**County and State** Polk County, Iowa

---

Photo 12: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0012)  
Warehouse north window lintel and sill detail, camera facing S.

Photo 13: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0013)  
Warehouse east and north elevations, camera facing SW.

Photo 14: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0014)  
Warehouse first floor, camera facing SE.

Photo 15: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0015)  
Warehouse first floor loading area from original freight elevation, camera facing S.

Photo 16: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0016)  
Warehouse first floor loading area, camera facing SE.

Photo 17: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0017)  
Warehouse first floor truck well, camera facing SE.

Photo 18: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0018)  
Warehouse second floor raised floor over train well, camera facing W.

Photo 19: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0019)  
Warehouse third floor original stairs, camera facing S to second floor.

Photo 20: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0020)  
Warehouse upper level typical central freight elevator, third floor, camera facing S.

Photo 21: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0021)  
Warehouse, typical upper floor, third floor, camera facing E.

Photo 22: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0022)  
Warehouse, typical southern freight elevator, third floor, camera facing SE.

Photo 23: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0023)  
Warehouse, central stairs, camera facing N from fourth floor to fifth floor.

Photo 24: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0024)  
Warehouse, typical view of south freight elevator, fourth floor, camera facing S.

Photo 25: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0025)  
Warehouse, typical fifth floor view, camera facing E.



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**Section** Images **Page** 47 **Property name** L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
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Photo 26: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0026)  
Warehouse, typical upper floor view of south freight elevator with tin fire doors, fifth floor, camera facing S.

Photo 27: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0027)  
Warehouse basement utility tunnel curbing and openings (behind plastic), camera facing S.

Photo 28: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0028)  
Warehouse basement, typical view, camera facing E.

Photo 29: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0029)  
Factory east and north elevations and loading dock, camera facing SW.

Photo 30: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0030)  
Factory entry vestibule, camera facing W.

Photo 31: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0031)  
Factory typical concrete ceiling and exposed brick walls, first floor, camera facing S.

Photo 32: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0032)  
Factory, original tin fire door to basement, camera facing E.

Photo 33: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0033)  
Factory typical view, first floor camera facing E.

Photo 34: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0034)  
Factory wide stairs between first and second floors, camera facing E.

Photo 35: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0035)  
Factory, typical original stairs, second floor camera facing W.

Photo 36: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0036)  
Factory, typical view, second floor camera facing W.

Photo 37: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0037)  
Factory, typical view, third floor camera facing SE.

Photo 38: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0038)  
Factory, typical view, fifth floor camera facing S.

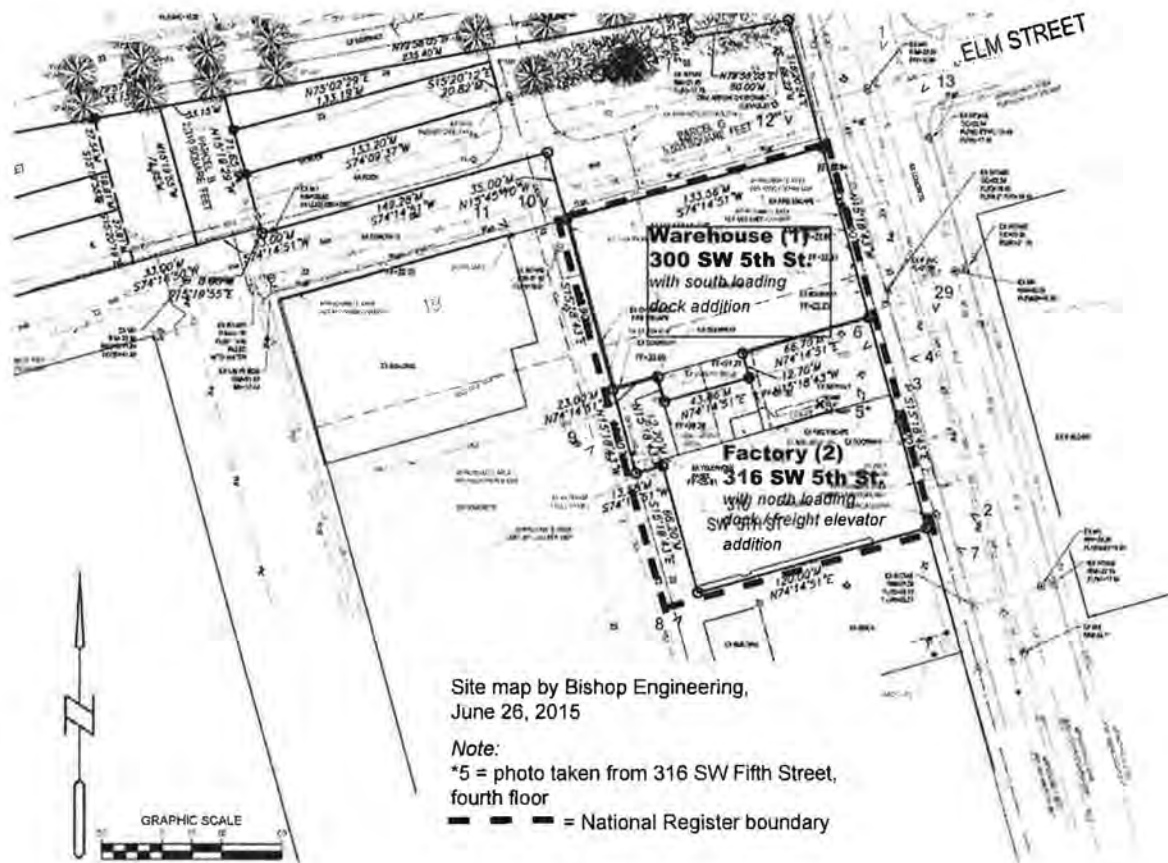
Photo 39: (IA\_PolkCounty\_LHarbachSonsWarehouseFactory\_0039)  
Factory basement vault door, camera facing S.

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National Park Service

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Section Images Page 48 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Site Plan



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

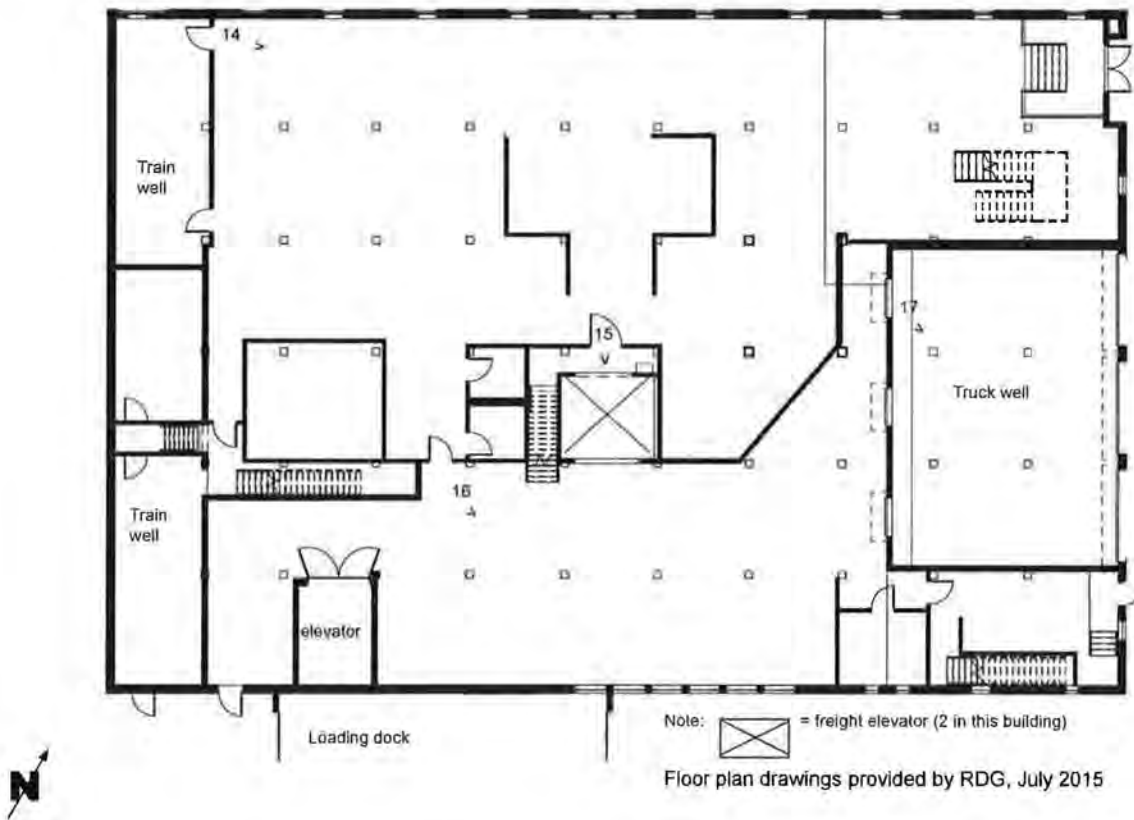
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Section Images Page 49 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex

County and State Polk County, Iowa

**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
First Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse, 300 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design





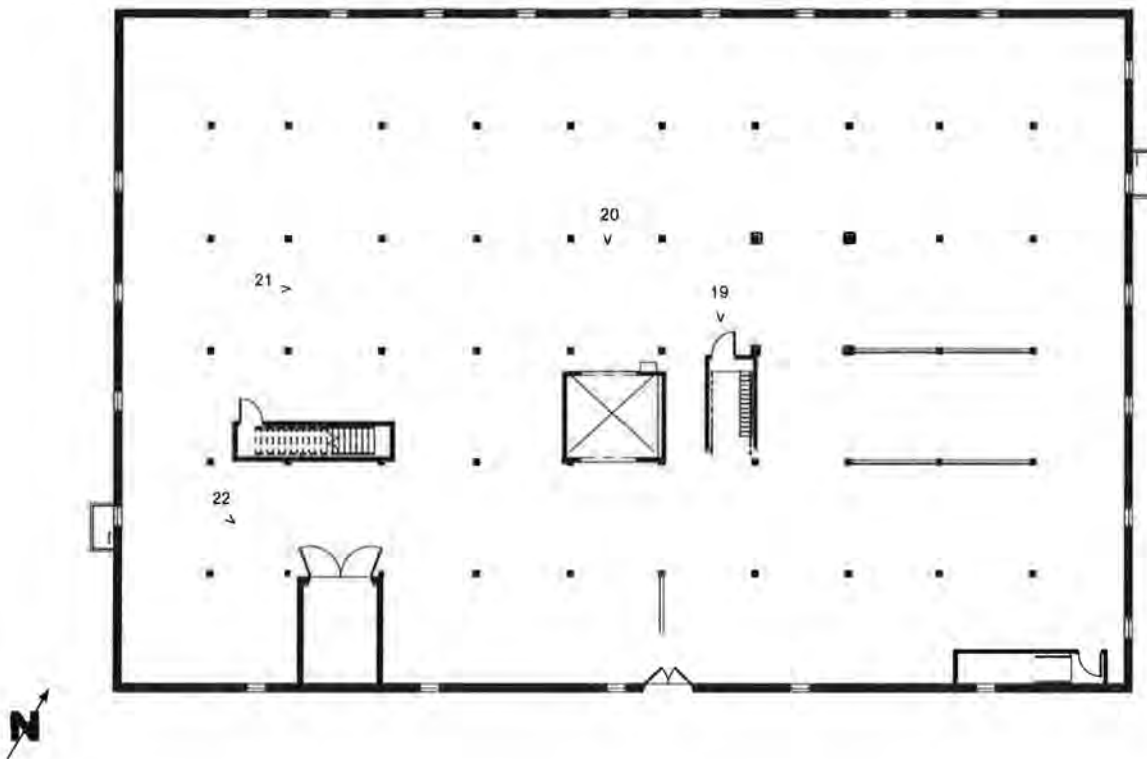
**United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
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Section Images Page 51 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

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**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Third Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse, 300 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

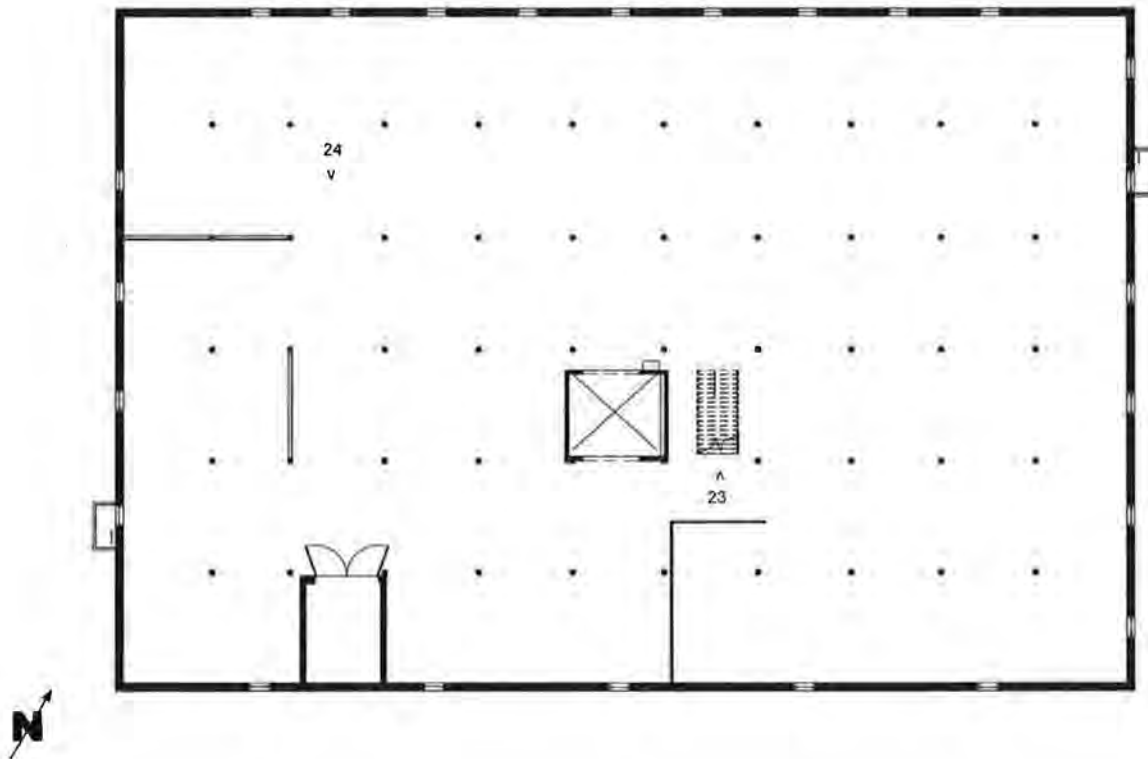
**United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Images Page 52 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

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**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Fourth Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse, 300 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

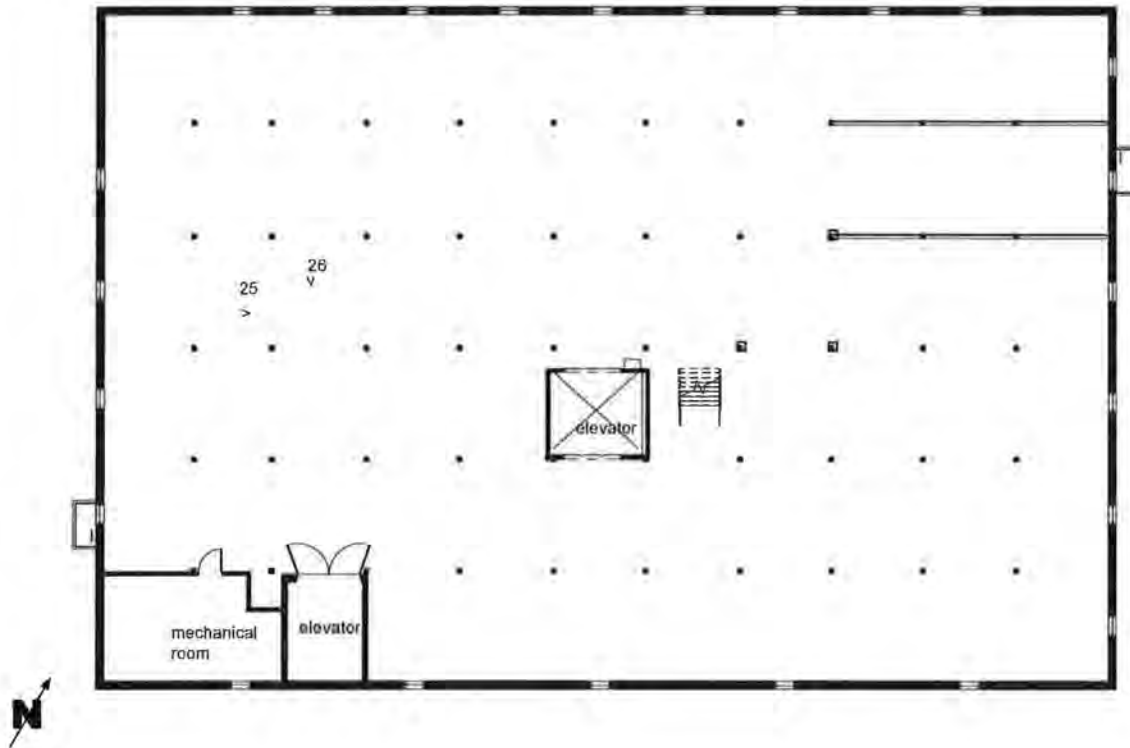
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Images Page 53 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

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**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Fifth Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse, 300 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

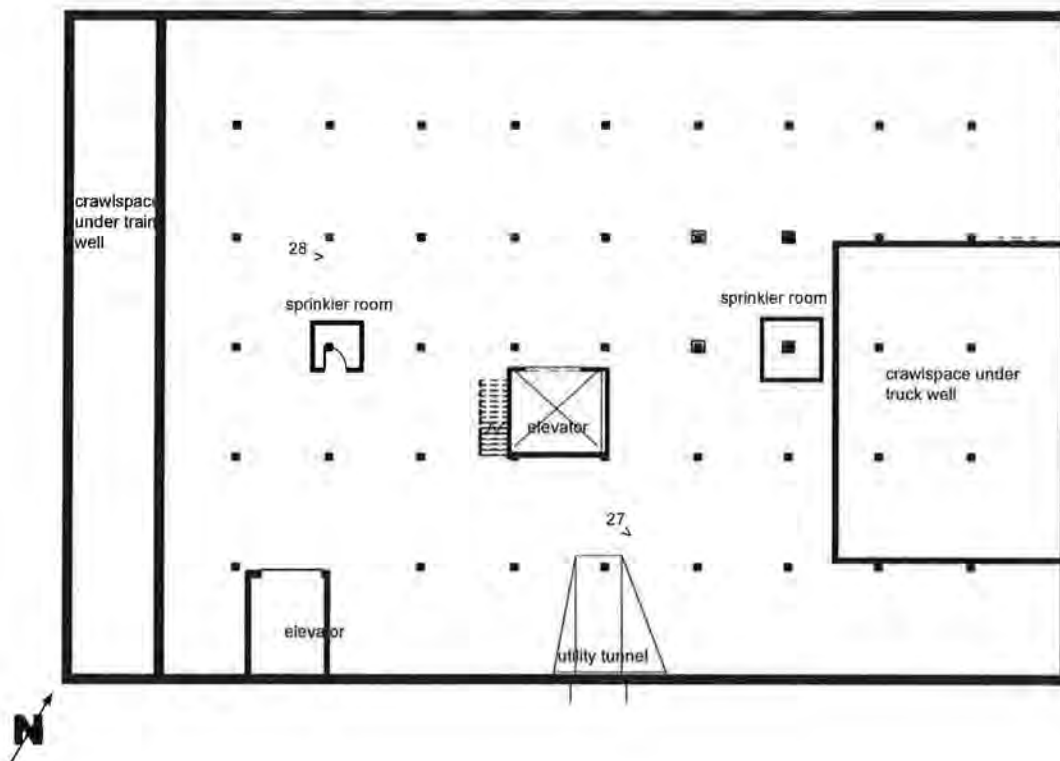
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National Park Service**

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Continuation Sheet**

Section Images Page 54 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex

County and State Polk County, Iowa

**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Basement, L. Harbach & Sons Warehouse, 300 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design



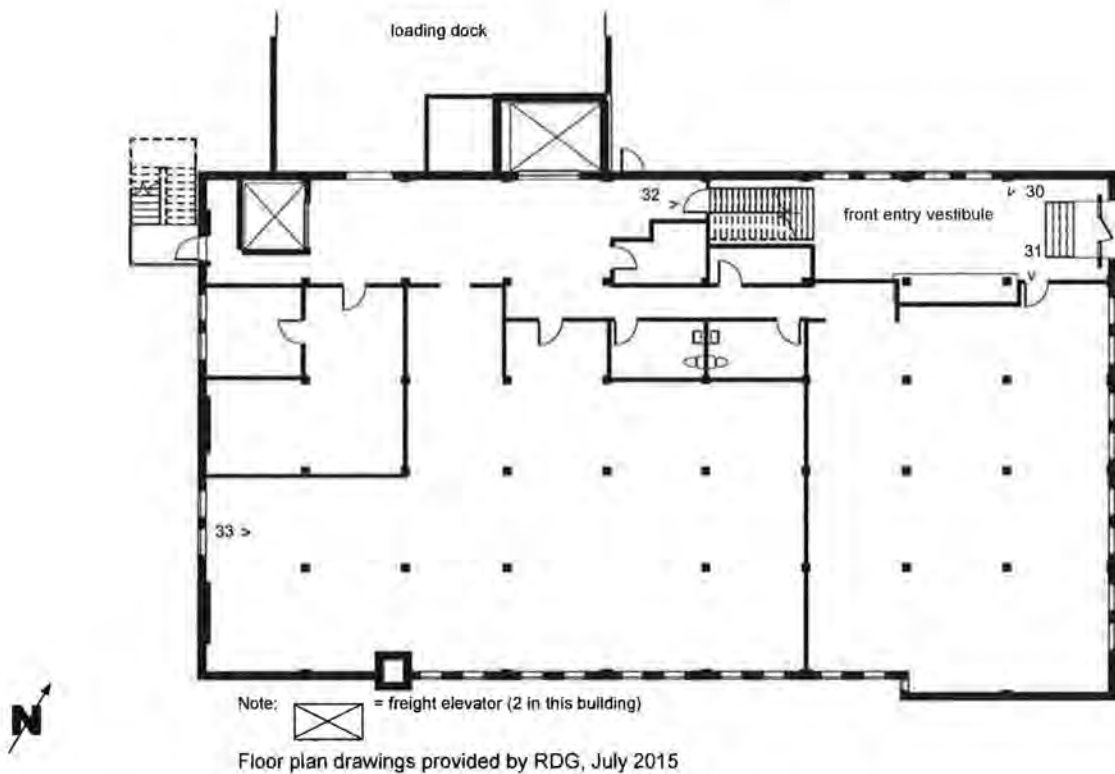
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National Park Service**

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Section Images Page 55 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex

County and State Polk County, Iowa

**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
First Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Factory Building, 316 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

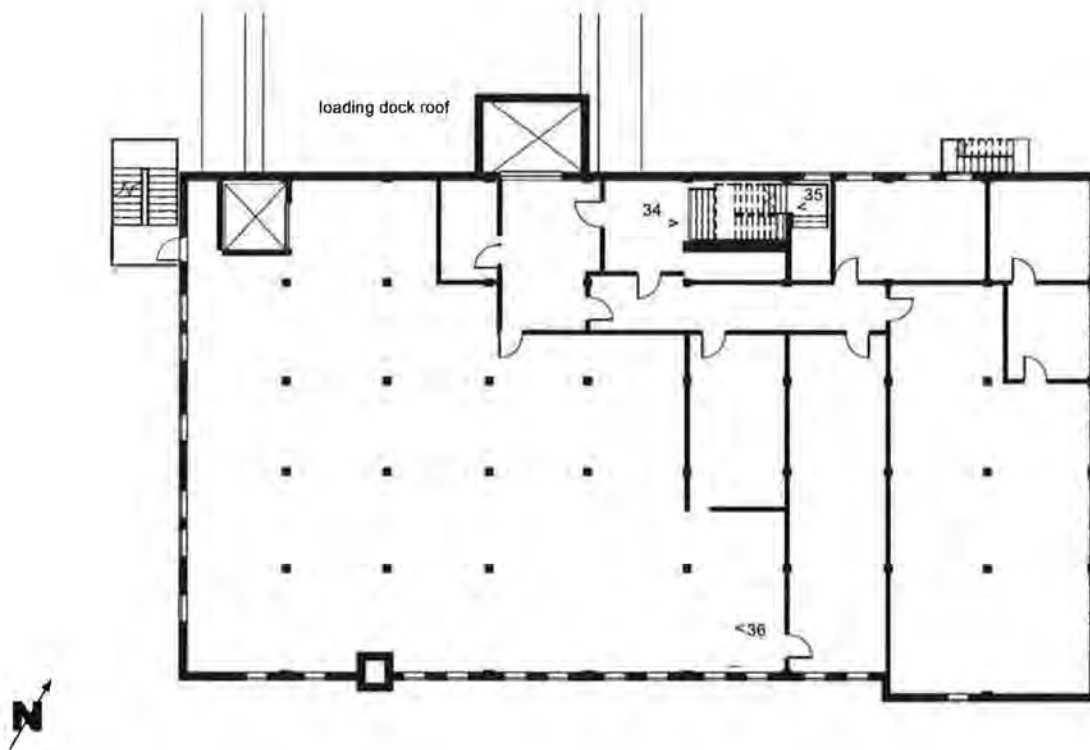
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Section Images Page 56 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex

County and State Polk County, Iowa

**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Second Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Factory Building, 316 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

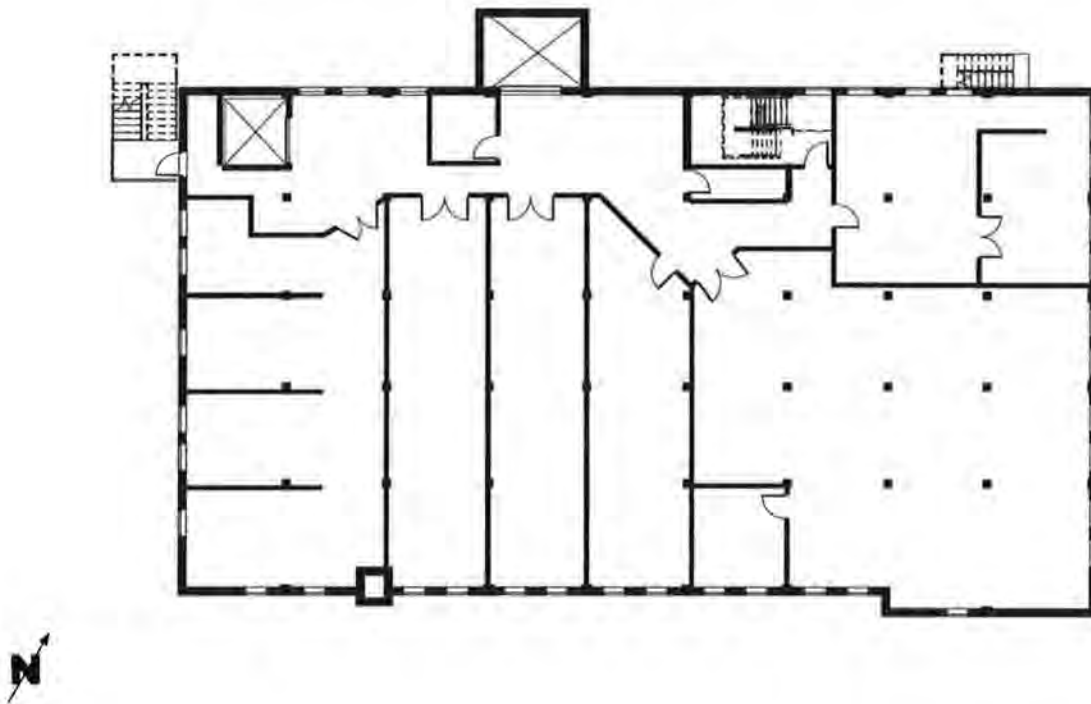
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Section Images Page 57 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

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**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Third Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Factory Building, 316 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

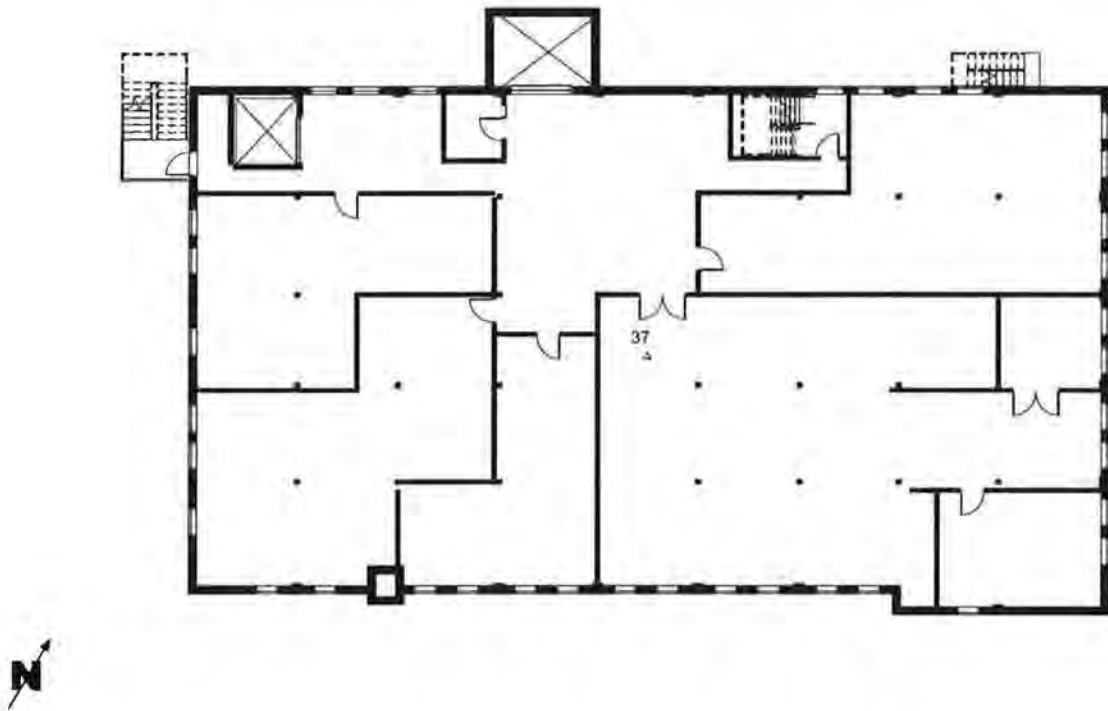
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Section Images Page 58 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex  
County and State Polk County, Iowa

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**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Fourth Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Factory Building, 316 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design



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National Park Service**

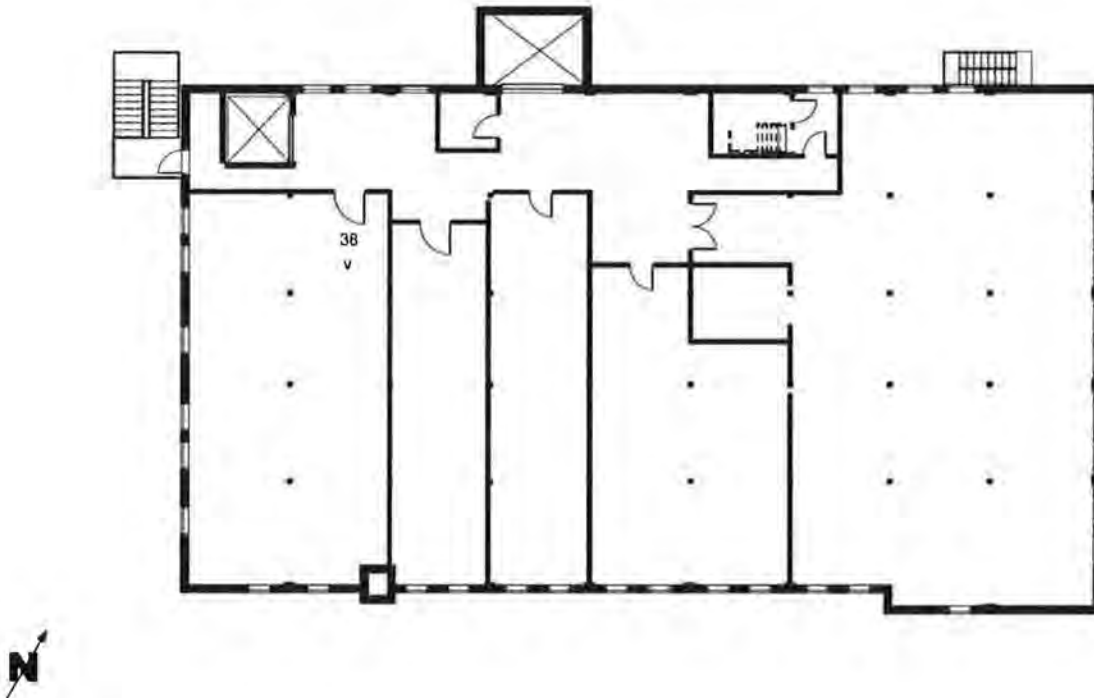
**National Register of Historic Places  
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Section Images Page 59 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex

County and State Polk County, Iowa

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**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA  
Fifth Floor, L. Harbach & Sons Factory Building, 316 SW 5th Street**



Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design

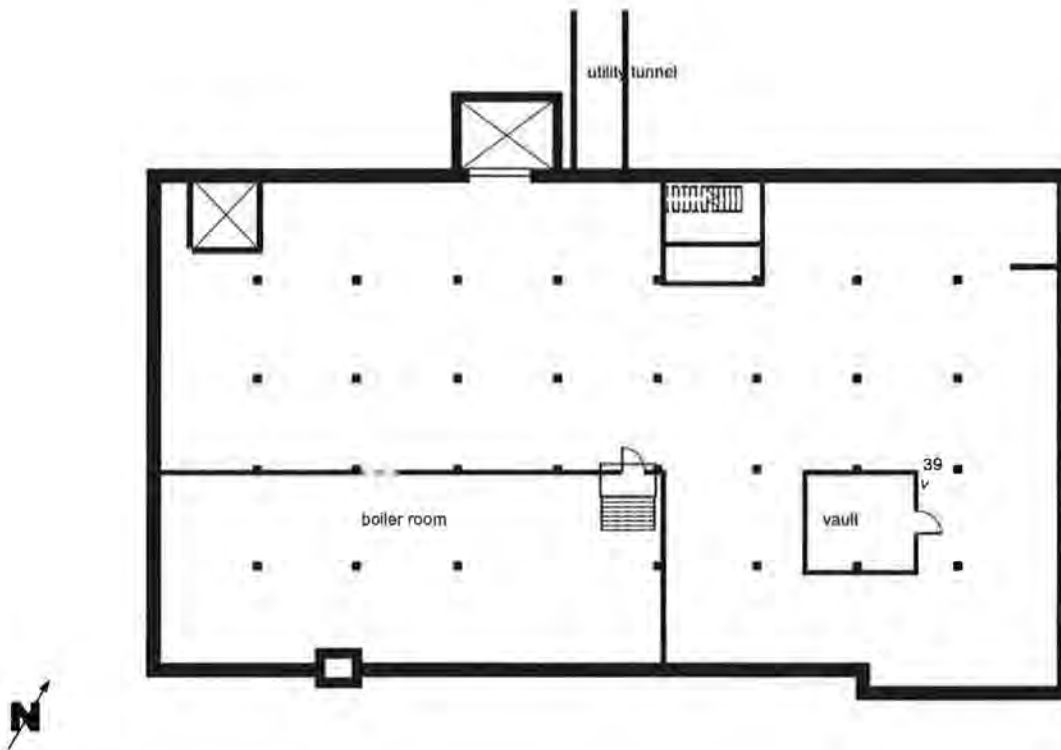
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National Register of Historic Places  
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Section Images Page 60 Property name L. Harbach & Sons Co. Warehouse and Factory Complex

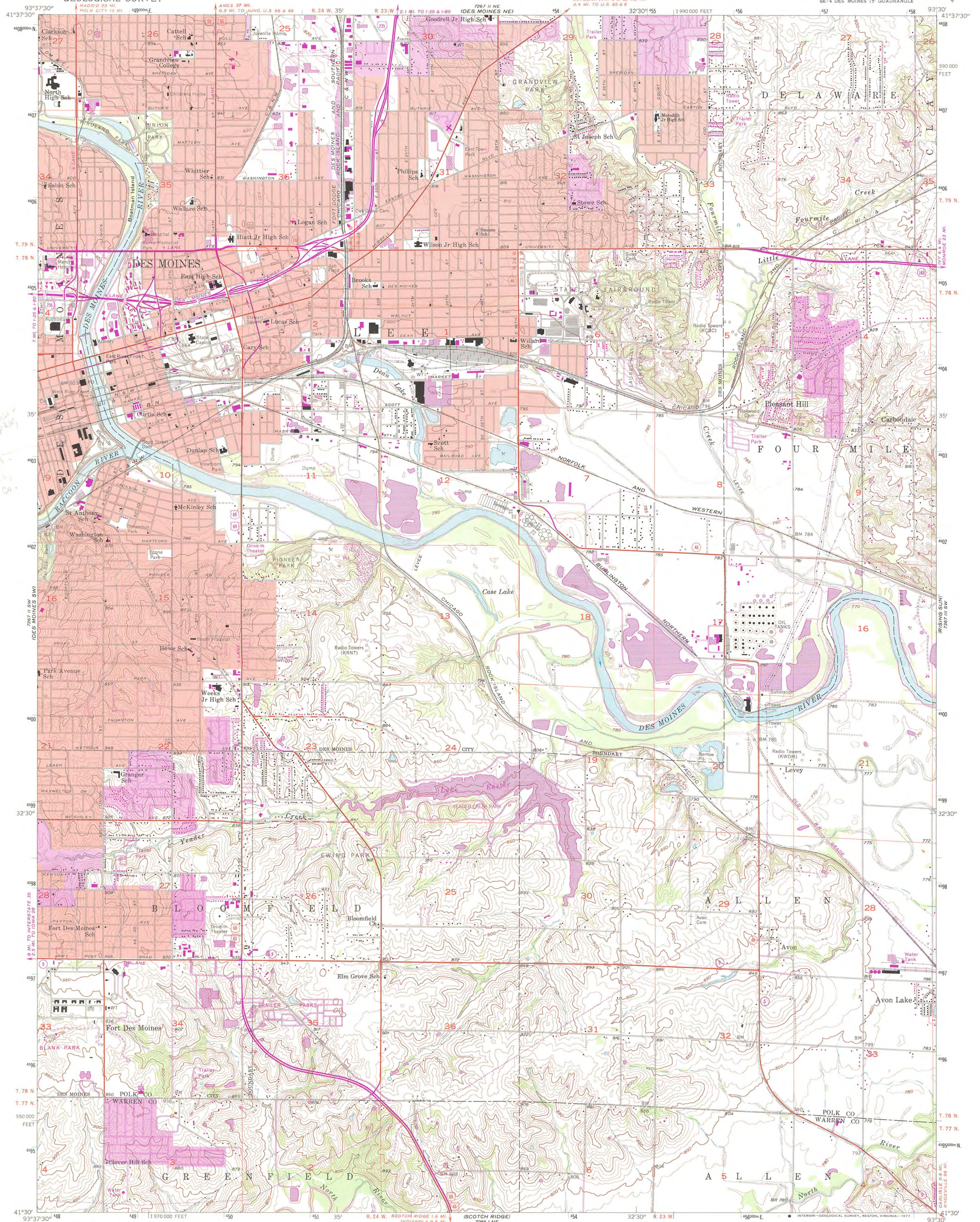
County and State Polk County, Iowa

**Photo Key, L. Harbach & Sons Factory and Warehouse Complex, 300-316 SW 5th Street, Des Moines, IA.  
Basement, L. Harbach & Sons Factory Building, 316 SW 5th Street**



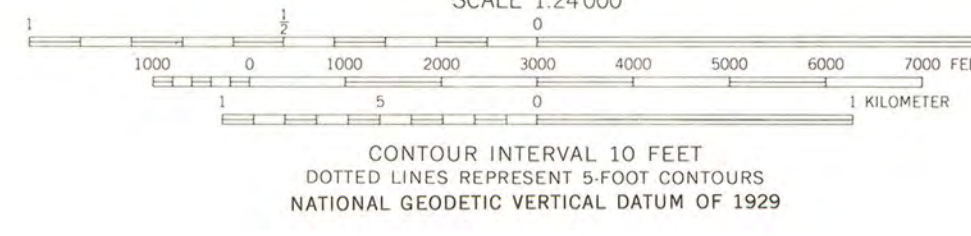
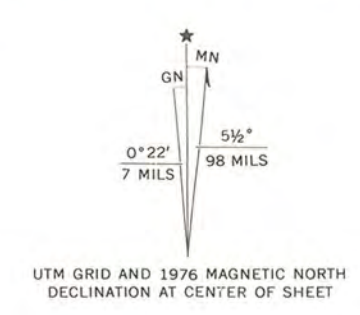
Drawing courtesy of RDG Planning and Design





L. Washburn &  
Sons  
300-316  
SW Fifth St.  
Des Moines,  
IA, Polk Co.

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with Polk County and City of Des Moines. Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Iowa Geodetic Survey. Topography from aerial photographs by Kelsh plotter. Aerial photographs taken 1956. Field check 1956. Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum. 10,000-foot grid based on Iowa coordinate system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue. Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown. Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1967, 1971, and 1976. This information not field checked. Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas.



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



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

DES MOINES SE, IOWA  
SE/4 DES MOINES 15' QUADRANGLE  
N4130-W9330/7.5

1956  
PHOTOREVISED 1967, 1971, AND 1976  
AMS 7267 II SE-SERIES V876

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



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GAS  
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&  
SYSTEMS



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WAREHOUSE

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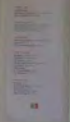
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ART

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Harbach, L. and Sons Furniture Warehouse and Factory Complex

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Polk

DATE RECEIVED: 11/06/15      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/30/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/15/15      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/22/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000918

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    12/21/2015 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A&C

REVIEWER Patrick Andrews

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 12/21/2015

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.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

NANCY GYNNIE, DIRECTOR  
CHRIS RIAMEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

TERRY E. BRANTNER, GOVERNOR  
KIM REYNOLDS, COMPTROLLER

RECEIVED 2280

NOV 06 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

November 3, 2015

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register and National Historic Landmarks  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following National Register nomination(s) from Iowa are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable.

- L. Harbach & Sons Wholesale Furniture Warehouse and Factory Complex, 300-316 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, Polk County
- American Republic Insurance Company Headquarters Building, 601 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Des Moines, Polk County
- West Liberty Fairgrounds Historic District, 101 N. Clay Street, West Liberty, Muscatine County

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill  
National Register

