

# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE 1849 C Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20240

August 30, 2010

Notice to file:

This property has been automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This is due to the fact that the publication of our Federal Register Notice: "National Register of Historic Places: Pending Nominations and Other Actions" was delayed beyond our control to the point where the mandated 15 day public comment period ended after our required 45 day time frame to act on the nomination. If the 45<sup>th</sup> day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the property will be automatically listed the next business day. The nomination is technically adequate and meets the National Register criteria for evaluation, and thus, automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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National Register of Historic F	Places		NAT REGIS	The new		
Registration Form			NATIO	NAL PAR	ISTORIC PLAC	ES
this form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individu lational Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the WA" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materi arrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typew	e appropriate box or t rials, and areas of sign	by entering the informati inficance, enter only cat	n How to Complete on requested. If an egories and subcate	the National I	Register of Historic P ot apply to the prope	Places Registration Form any being documented, enter
1. Name of Property	-					
Historic name _ Apartments at 2514 North	h 16 <sup>th</sup> Street					
Other names/site numberDO09:138-00	05					
2. Location						
Street & number2514 North 16 <sup>th</sup> Street	1			-1	Not for	publication []
City or town Omaha				_	Vicinity	11
State Nebraska Code NE	County De	ouglas	Code	055	_ Zip code	68110
3. State/Federal Agency Certificati	ion		_		-	
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# Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street

Name of Property

#### **5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) X Private Public-local Public-state Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box) X Building(s) District Site Structure Object Douglas County, Nebraska County and State

# Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.) Contributing Noncontributing

0	Buildings
0	Sites
0	Structures
0	Objects
0	Total
	0 0 0 0 0

Number of contributing resources previously

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska, 1880-1962

## 6. Function or Use

### **Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.) DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.) VACANT / WORK IN PROGRESS

listed in the National Register

# 7. Description

# **Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:

Neo-classical Revival

LATE 19th and EARLY 20th CENTURY AMERICAN

MOVEMENTS: Craftsman

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Concrete

Walls Brick

Roof Built-Up Rock / Metal

Other

### **Narrative Description**

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

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# National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

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The Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street are located in Omaha, Nebraska's largest metropolitan city (2000 pop. 390,007). By the 1890s North 16th Street, formerly Sherman Boulevard, was a main streetcar route connecting downtown Omaha with North Omaha and today is one of the city's largest linear concentrations of history apartment buildings. However, the loss of historic building stock in North Omaha is staggering due to population loss and deterioration of the built environment common in inner-city neighborhoods across the United States. North Omaha's historic built environment is therefore relegated to isolated buildings and districts, including a small pocket along N. 16<sup>th</sup> between Ohio and Lake Avenues where the nominated property is located.

The Apartment Building at 2514 N. 16th Street is a "four-plex flat," an apartment type defined in the Multiple Property Document "Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska from 1880-1962."1 This brick building sits on a concrete foundation and is two stories tall with four apartment units. The building was fully occupied by 1930. Local architect, Richard Everett's design exhibits characteristics of the Sunlight and Air Movement and the Craftsman and Neoclassical architectural styles. Most noteworthy are the imposing double-decker porches on the east-facing facade that provide each apartment unit with substantial outdoor living space.

The Apartments at 2514 N. 16th Street are located in a two-story, rectilinear brick building with an eight foot basement that sits on a concrete foundation. It is approximately thirty-five feet wide (on street facing and rear sides) and fifty feet deep. The landscape rises from the sidewalk to the building and a short flight of concrete steps brings pedestrians up the small hill. A second set of concrete steps with short brick sidewalls leads to the first story porches. Paved walks extend from the front of the building and around each side. The building contains two apartment units on each floor with approximately 800 square feet of space. Large individual porches add another 100 square feet of outdoor space to each apartment. The middle of the building is bisected by a central stair hall that provides access to the second floor apartments. The building has a flat roof covered with built up rock. The parapet is capped with ridged metal along the side and rear elevations.

Constructed with dark brick, the east-facing facade stands in contrast with the more standard red brick in a common bond that makes up the remainder of the building. The facade is dominated by substantial two story porches that project eight feet outward from the building. The porches are defined by four square porch supports that are decorated with brick corbelling and poured concrete capitals at each story. A wide central band crossing the entire front of the building divides the porches horizontally. The band is decorated with a rowlock course of brick at its base, a brick and cast concrete arch at the center and rectangular panels of patterned brick at the sides. Here the porch structure terminates over the center of the building but extend upward to the support the roof structures of both second story porches.

Above the porch supports the upper wall is divided by a thin cast concrete cornice that projects slightly. A rowlock course just above the capitals of the porch supports and decorative brick arranged to evoke triglyphs below the cornice decorate the lower portion. Above the corner, the parapet is decorated with gently peaked pediments flanked by single crenulations on the front and outward sides of the porches. With the exception of the parapet, decorative features are carried through to the recessed wall face of the building. The parapet motif is mimicked on the first story roof above the main entrance.

First story porches have a poured concrete floor and a low brick kneewall caped with cast concrete. Second story porches are similar, but their floors are constructed with wood decking. The projecting central stair entrance divides lower porches. The single-paneled door at the central has a large rectangular light with a denticulated sill and is flanked by Craftsman-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This MPD has been returned by National Register staff due to insufficient development of Section F. It is currently being revised for resubmission.

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style sidelights. While each apartment can be accessed from the central stair hall, each also has a door opening to its porch. These Craftsman-style doors have three horizontally-arranged lights above a single panel. Only one upper story door has been replaced. Each porch entrance also once had eight-light exterior doors, but only the north apartment on the first story retains its original one. A single one-over-one casement window is located to outside of each door. Finally, a ribbon of four slender fixed windows decorates the recessed second story wall between the porches.

The side elevations of the building are identical, with the exception of the few windows that have been replaced. The roofline steps back three times between the facade to the rear elevation, much like a commercial building. The easternmost bay contains three double-hung, three-over-one windows in a ribbon on the first and second stories, which provide ample light to each apartment's living room. Next there are paired, elongated, double-hung, three-over one windows. Small, one-over-one, double-hung windows ventilate the bathrooms, and a longer one-over-one window lights the small back bedrooms. Small awning-style windows are located at the basement level. All side elevation windows have concrete sills, with the exception of those at the basement level, which have rowlock brick sills. Basement and first story windows are currently covered with plywood to secure the building.

The rear elevation has eight foot projections on either side where the back bedrooms are located. One-over-one, doublehung windows are located on both stories of the side projections. A shared wood staircase between the projections provides access to each apartment. The staircase is covered by a partially-open frame structure with a shed roof that extends slightly beyond the back of the building. The structure appears to be original, however, the openings are currently covered with fiberglass and the whole structure has been painted green making it difficult to understand from the outside. Inside, windows on the interior walls of each projection once provided light to the back windows. The small kitchen of each apartment is accessed by a paneled door with rectangular light and a transom. One-over-one, double-hung windows are located between the rear doors on each story.

#### Interior

Each apartment contains a large living room, bedroom / dining room, bathroom, kitchen, and one bedroom. The condition and integrity of each apartment varies greatly, but sufficient original materials, fixtures and finishes remain to establish its original design, materials, workmanship and historic feeling. Each apartment has three entrances: off the main stair hall into the living room, from the porch into the living room and from the back stairway into the kitchen. The living room takes up the entire width of the front of each apartment before opening into a bedroom and a hallway. The hallway leads to a small full bathroom and the kitchen before reaching the small bedroom at the back of each apartment. A small closet for the HVAC systems is located under the stair.

The Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street are finished with plaster walls, hardwood floors, simple door and window surrounds, wide baseboards and low-profile crown molding. Almost all of the woodwork has been painted. Original features of note include built-in closets in the living room and bedrooms. Murphy beds in at the bedrooms / dining rooms, medicine cabinets in the bathrooms, kitchen cabinetry in some one of the apartments, forced-air vents, interior doors and hardware and push-button electrical switches.

#### Condition and Integrity

Unfortunately, while the building was vacant it was repeatedly broken into and utilized for various purposes leading to a decline in its cleanliness and condition. In particular, some trespassers destroyed walls in the bathrooms and kitchens in an effort to steal copper plumbing and wiring. The Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street, however, have recently been purchased by Ethel Mitchell who has successfully rehabilitated the Broomfield Rowhouse (National Register listed, 2007), also in North Omaha. Ms. Mitchell has secured the building and intends to utilize tax credit incentives to revitalize the Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street.

# Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street

Name of Property

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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.)

- X 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.
- Property embodies the distinctive X С 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 vielded, or is likely to vield 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.
- Removed from its original location. в
- С 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 #

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Community Planning and Development** 

Architecture

Period of Significance

1929

#### Significant Dates

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

#### **Cultural Affiliation**

NA

## Architect/Builder

Richard M. Everett

# Primary location for additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University X Other

  - Name of repository: State Archives

NPS Form 10-900a (8-86)

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Ti. Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street are significant at the local level under Criterion C as one of North Omaha's few remaining "four-plexes," an apartment type that once was common to the neighborhood. Moreover, it is the only remaining small apartment building in the North Omaha's Near North Side neighborhood that represents the Sunlight and Air Apartment Sub-Type. The building is also significant under Criterion A in the area of community planning and development for its association with the development and continued significance of North 16<sup>th</sup> Street as a streetcar-related apartment corridor. The Apartments were constructed in 1929, and that year serves as the period of significance. This period of significance reflects its architectural significance under Criterion C, as well as its contribution to the development of North 16th Street's apartment corridor.

#### **Criterion A: Community Planning and Development**

Omaha's Near North Side began as an affluent neighborhood of country estates for the likes of Agustus and Herman Kountze and John Redick, names that still loom large over the city. By the 1880s Sherman Avenue, later North 16th Street, had become the thoroughfare of choice for the construction of stylish mansions for many of Omaha's wealthy elite. Its popularity was due in large part to its location in relation to the natural environment; prior to 1877 Sherman Avenue provided a terrific view of the Missouri River. However, in that year the Missouri changed course and the growing industrialization of the area between downtown and Sherman Avenue's grand residences "belched steam and smoke."2 By the turn of the 20th Century, Omaha's wealthy began their march in search of more favorable living space to the north and west, opening the Near North Side to new patterns of development.

Before abandoning the Near North Side, however, Omaha's elite made their mark in two significant ways that would have long-lasting effects. The most dramatic was bringing the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition to North Omaha in 1898. Located on land donated by Herman Kountz between the railroad tracks to the east and north, North 22<sup>nd</sup> to the west and Binney Street to the south, the 1898 Exposition helped cement Sherman Avenue as North Omaha's main streetcar route. As explained in Patterns on the Landscape: Heritage Conservation in North Omaha, "Fairgoers frequently took the carline to the 16th Street Midway entrance," and by the time, "lines were electrified, remnants of the old horsecar lines on 17th, 18th, and 19th were dropped."<sup>3</sup> Eventually its status as a well traveled street car line would lead to heavy development of multi-family housing along its course, including the construction of the Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street.

The second lasting contribution of North Omaha's early history as a neighborhood of large estates was the pattern of subdivision and lot arrangement that evolved as each land owner parceled out their property after deciding to move on. South of Grace Street, all of the land along North 16th was platted by 1880, but further north some parcels were left unorganized as late as 1918.<sup>4</sup> In particular the area between Grace and Ohio Streets was subject to inconsistent subdivisions. Here, wealthy individuals obtained long lots that stretched an entire city block on either side of Sherman Avenue so they could build their houses in the middle of the block, enhancing the image of a country estate.<sup>5</sup> Upon their departure, however, there was no standardized system of subdivision. The block where the nominated property is located, for instance, is home to three subdivisions (Hall Place, Home Place, and Tax Lot 16), all of which were platted at different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Landmark Heritage Preservation Commission. Patterns on the Landscape: Heritage Conservation in North Omaha, Omaha, NE: Klopp Printing Company, 1984, 26.

Ibid., 27-28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, "1890 Map of Omaha, Neb. Sheet 127 and 130," "1918 Map of Omaha, Neb., Vol. 1, Sheet 58," and "1934 Map of Omaha, Neb., Vol. 2, Sheet 245."

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times and in different patterns.<sup>6</sup> This phenomenon likely encouraged the eventual development of small-scale, multi-family housing which was easier to site than single-family residences or large apartment complexes.

# The North 16th Street Apartment Corridor

As mentioned above North 16<sup>th</sup> Street and North 24<sup>th</sup> Street became the Near North Side's main connection to downtown Omaha as important streetcar routes. North 24<sup>th</sup> Street would eventually develop its own identity as a commercial, cultural and social center for Omaha's African-American community. This was particularly true after a racially-charged Omaha riot in 1919, coupled with racism and fear surrounding a quickly growing black population, led to the creation of a ghetto in the Near North Side during the 1920s. This split the neighborhood in half, with Omaha's African-American population generally restricted to an area from North 20<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> Streets and Cuming to Spencer Streets.<sup>7</sup> That North 16<sup>th</sup> Street was home to some of Omaha's most stylish and innovative apartment developments by the 1920s may have kept it from inclusion in the ghetto.

Streetcar routes and apartments developed hand-in-hand in cities across the Midwest during the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> Century. As streetcar routes were solidified throughout Omaha, "upscale neighborhoods on popular destination routes developed from primarily high-end single family residences to a mix of single family and multi-family residences, including attached dwellings and apartment buildings."<sup>8</sup> This was certainly the case for Sherman Avenue, "which experienced a transformation from a nineteenth century country drive lined with estates to a heavily traveled artery convenient to downtown."<sup>9</sup> Convenience and setting led to the development of several multi-family dwellings from about 1889 through 1930 that set the tone along North 16<sup>th</sup> Street for years to come. While Omaha's wealthy no longer saw Sherman Avenue as an attractive address, the middle and working classes were beginning to see the appeal of living along North 16<sup>th</sup> Street. They could easily ride the streetcar from their rented apartment to work downtown for a year or two as they saved money to purchase their own house.

By the early 20th Century, apartments in the United States were built in a variety of shapes and sizes and catered to different markets:

Generally apartments marketed to the upper class continued to be designed in consistent architectural styles and maintained the feel of a high-end single-family residence. According to *The American Architect*, the ideal apartment building was completely residential in nature, had spacious living quarters with the planning features of an individual residence, and high quality finishes. Phone service, electricity, and steam heat were expected amenities.

Meanwhile a strong emerging market was the growing middle class. More efficient and less house-like apartment buildings began to emerge to fit the financial and social goals of this group. These apartments typically maintained exterior features that were icons of high-style architecture, while minimizing or eliminating some interior rooms and finishing the interior at the same level as an average house of the period. On the exterior, buildings of this class exhibit detailing of Sullivanesque terra cotta, or an Arts and Crafts covered entry porch, or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Patterns on the Landscape, 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Patterns on the Landscape, 42.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Honebrink, Jennifer. "Multiple Property Document: Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska from 1880-1962," 2009. [DRAFT], E-9.

Patterns on the Landscape, 26.

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similar easily-recognized elements that are associated with various architectural styles, while on the interior the kitchen may become a kitchenette, or a Murphy bed may allow a dining room to double as a bedroom.<sup>10</sup>

Both high-end and more modest apartments were built along North 16th Street. In the 1880s and 1890s, duplexes were developed along side streets like Burdette and Sherwood. The neo-classical Sherman Apartments. North Omaha's first large apartment building, was constructed in 1897 to take advantage of the excitement surrounding the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition.<sup>11</sup> Robert Strehlow and his partner, architect Frederick Henninger, had completed Strehlow Terrace and The Margret by 1916. Both were impressive developments that incorporated fine materials and workmanship and served as excellent examples of their respective architectural styles: Prairie and Jacobethian Revival.<sup>12</sup>

Large-scale, high-end apartments like Strehlow Terrace. The Margret and Sherman Apartments have always been the most visible components of the North 16<sup>th</sup> Street Apartment Corridor. They have also been the most likely to survive North Omaha's socio-economic plight and urban renewal efforts. As such, they are the only examples of North 16<sup>th</sup> Street apartments current recognized for their historical and architectural significance with listing in the National Register of Historic Places. However, small-scale apartments and duplexes were just as important to North 16th Street's development. a fact recognized in Patterns on the Landscape:

Omaha never experienced a great deal of tenement construction like other cities, and instead had a housing stock of small cottages for workers. As a result, when multi-family housing began to appear in the 1890s, it took the form of duplexes or smaller apartment buildings.13

Usually referred to as "flats," the apartment version of these small-scale, multi-family dwellings remained popular through the 1960s, because, "their smaller size made them easy to finance and locate."<sup>14</sup> At least 181 small-scale apartments, flats or duplexes were located in Omaha's Near North Side neighborhood by 1934.<sup>15</sup> Along North 16<sup>th</sup> Street the construction of small-scale flats for the middle and working classes continued until about 1930. This type of apartment likely made up a majority of the ten apartment buildings constructed along the route between 1909 and 1916.<sup>16</sup> After World War I, previously under-developed areas along North 16th Street were filled with small-scale flats, including the long-avoided 2500 block and its three incompatible subdivisions. By 1934, the block contained: a house flat at 1502 (nonextant), a four-plex at 1504 (non-extant), a house flat at 1506 (non-extant), a four-plex at 2514, a duplex at 2532, and the U-Shaped Bretnor Court at 2536.17

### The Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street

The 1928 Omaha City directory listing for 2514 North 16th Street reads simply, "Elkin, Jos.," but one year later the situation had changed significantly. Joseph Elkin, a carpenter for the Baker Ice Machine Co., is living in Apartment #1 of the "Apartments" at 2514 North 16th Street along with Victor Zucker (#2), Mrs. Margret Taylor (#3) and Herman Cohen (#4).

<sup>10 &</sup>quot;Apartments MPD," E-8 - E-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Patterns on the Landscape, 27-28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Biorkman, Lynn. "National Register Nomination, Strehlow Terrance," 1986; Honebrink, Jennifer, "National Register Nomination, The Margret," 2006. <sup>13</sup> Patterns on the Landscape, 27.

<sup>14</sup> Apartments MPD, E-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Nunn, Jessie, "North Omaha Study: Small Scale Flats, Apartments and Duplexes," Compiled from 1934 Sanborn Maps of Omaha, Nebraska, Vol. 2 in an area bounded by Pinkney to the north, Nicholas to the South, North 30th to the West and railroad lines to the east and covered by 34 individual sheets.

Patterns on the Landscape, 28. These is a count of buildings other than Strehlow Terrace.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Apartments MPD and 1934 Sanborn Map, Omaha, Nebraska, Vol. 2, Sheet 245.

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As a carpenter and the first resident listed at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, it seems probable Elkin was somehow involved in their construction. Elkin, Zucker and Cohen were members of North Omaha's significant Jewish population, and Mrs. Taylor was most likely a widow. While South Omaha attracted the majority of new immigrants during the early 1900s with meatpacking jobs, North Omaha was attractive to those more likely to work downtown or in nearby factories.<sup>18</sup> In 1929, this was certainly true at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Along with Elkin, Cohen and Taylor also worked in the downtown vicinity at the Medical Arts Cigar Store and the Kimball Laundry Co., respectively. Zucker, on the other hand, either owned or worked at a department store just up North 16<sup>th</sup> Street between Corby and Maple that served the nearby neighborhood.<sup>19</sup>

Like most small-scale flats and apartments in Omaha, the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street were clearly built workingclass population eager to move up and onward. This contrasts greatly with Stehlow Terrace, which typical housed middle and upper-middle class tenants, or The Margret, which was marketed to "aspiring white collar business men and women."<sup>20</sup> Unlike these largely architect driven projects, the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street were the work of developer H. A. Wolf, who purchased lots 3 and 4 of Hall Place in 1926.<sup>21</sup> As early as 1909, Wolf and his partner, J. B. Robinson, were members of the Omaha Real Estate Exchange and were dealing "Real Estate, Insurance, Rentals, Loans and Bonds," from their office in the Paxton Block.<sup>22</sup> Forty years later H. A. Wolf Co. was launching, the "largest individual residential building campaign ever attempted in Omaha," a \$250,000 development that included forty individual residences.<sup>23</sup> In the meantime, Wolf was apparently finding success with the construction of small-scale developments like the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street.

Despite lacking the style and scale of a larger development, the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street did have certain amenities thanks in large part to H. A. Wolf Co.'s selection of architect Richard Everett and his Sunlight and Air-influenced design. While not screened in for sleeping, the generous porches offered each tenant fine outdoor space and fantastic views of the neighborhood including the picturesque Sherman Apartments across the street. Each unit had ample windows, modern forced heat, a full kitchen and bath, and 1.5 bedrooms (with the Murphy bed). By 1937, the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street also had telephone service.<sup>24</sup> Finally, the apartments also had a detached garage located at the alley behind them (no longer extant).<sup>25</sup> While streetcar lines continued to spur multi-family construction into the 1930s, it would not be long before personal vehicles took over.

The Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street continued to attract tenants through the next decades. While the building was not associated with any particular ethnicity, tenants were typically of Jewish or Irish decent. For instance, when Elkin, Cohen and Henry J. Solig (Mrs. Taylor's replacement) moved out in 1933, they were replaced by Maurice Fleming, Mrs. Lilly McGinn (another widow) and Ralph Kilpatrick. Sometimes male tenants like Robert Hutton, a city fireman, or Archie Kay, a postal clerk, would move in only to move out a year later after getting married. Married working couples, however, also lived in the apartments. Salesman Bernard Foley and his stenographer wife Bessie lived in Apartment #3 from 1935 to 1938. Original tenants Victor and Clara Zucker lived in Apartment #2 until 1938, when they finally moved to 402 South

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Patterns on the Landscape, 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Omaha City Directories: (1928), 1187; (1929), 220, 275, 710, 787 and 934.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> "National Register Nomination, Strehlow Terrace," 8-4; "National Register Nomination, The Margret," 8-1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> City of Omaha, Deed Records for Lot 3, Hall Place, Addition to Omaha.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Robinson and Wolf Advertisement. "Official Historical Souvenir, Omaha Police Department," Omaha NE: Waters Printing Company, 1909. Accessed online, 25 June 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Daly-Bednarek, Janet R. The Changing Image of the City: Planning for Downtown Omaha, 1945-1973, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1992, 86. Accessed online 25 June 2010.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Omaha City Directories: (1937), 1066.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> 1934 Sanborn Map of Omaha, Nebraska, Vol. 2, Sheet 245.

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# National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Name of Property

**Douglas County, Nebraska** County and State

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40<sup>th</sup> Street. Other occupations of tenants between 1929 and 1938 were: a hat cleaner, a driver, a freight agent, a music teacher, an engineer, a chemist and a cook.26

#### Small-Scale Apartments, Flats and Duplexes in North Omaha Today

Despite their popularity and significance, very few small-scale flats, apartments and duplexes constructed in North Omaha survive today. Of the 181 small-scales apartments, flats and duplexes depicted on 1934 Sanborn maps of North Omaha 1934,151 buildings (or 83%) have been lost. A vast majority of those remaining are house flats that do not immediately read as multi-family dwellings. 27 Apparently their small size, a factor leading to their popularity, also made them easy to demolish during North Omaha's steady population decline and decay during the 1960s and 1970s. Between 1960 and 1980, North Omaha lost approximately 20,000 residents and 5,000 housing units.<sup>28</sup> This decline left North Omaha with open lots and substandard housing, caused at least in part by longstanding redlining policies that denied home improvement loans to African Americans. It is little surprise, then, that once "the invisible walls of the ghetto," fell during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, many of those with means left North Omaha.<sup>29</sup>

Even along North 16th Street with its concentration of apartments, the situation is much the same. While North 16th Street was just east of Omaha's recognized ghetto, it was affected by North Omaha's general decline all the same. By the 1970s, even Strehlow Terrace had fallen into disrepair. Partially rehabilitated with federal loans in an attempt at revitalization, the apartment complex was eventually sold by USDA-HUD.<sup>30</sup> Not surprisingly, small-scale apartments fared even worse. Of the eighteen small-scale multiple dwellings between Pinkney and Nicholas Streets in 1934, only three are still extant.<sup>31</sup> That leaves only a pair of buildings that could potentially compare to the nominated property in their ability to convey the significance of small-scale flats, apartments and duplexes in the development of the North 16<sup>th</sup> Street Apartment Corridor. There are duplexes located very nearby at 2532 North 16th Street and 2529 North 16th Street.

While duplexes do read somewhat similarly to the nominated property, their functional design varies so greatly that in Omaha they are addressed by a separate MPD, "Attached Dwellings of Omaha, Nebraska from 1880-1962." In addition, these particularly duplexes, while certainly contributing to an understanding of their surroundings, lack the stylistic interest of the Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street. Unlike the nominated property, neither was determined individually eligible for Local Landmark and/or National Register listing during the initial survey of multi-family dwellings by the Omaha Planning Department in the late 1980s.<sup>32</sup> However, it is recommended that a district including this property, the Sherman Apartments, Bretnor Court and the Duplexes at 2532 and 2529 North 16th Street be considered in the future.

### Significance: Criterion A, Community Planning and Development

The Multiple Property Document (MPD), "Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska, 1880 -1962," states that properties, "such as those associated with Omaha's original walkable neighborhoods, its streetcar and bus system and the adoption of the automobile as a primary means of transportation should be considered as eligible for the National Register," under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development.<sup>33</sup> The Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup>

27 "North Omaha Study"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Omaha City Directories: (1933), 200, 260, 700, 974; (1935), 319, 431, 1085; (1936), 521; (1938) 887, 1049.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Patterns on the Landscape, 63. The North Freeway along North 27<sup>th</sup> Street that led to mass condemnations and dislocations beginning in the late 1970s. <sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>31 &</sup>quot;North Omaha Study"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> "Apartments MPD," H-1, NeSHPO Survey and Inventory Database.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, F-1.

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Street meet this registration requirement for their significant association with the development of North 16<sup>th</sup> Street Apartment Corridor, which developed along one of the city's foremost streetcar lines during the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### Criterion C: The Sunlight and Air Movement and the Four-Plex Apartment

The Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street are an outstanding example of an apartment type, the four-plex, and the Sunlight and Air sub-type as identified in the Multiple Property Document, "Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska, 1880-1962." Neither type nor sub-type is particularly rare in Omaha, but the nominated property is exceptional for North Omaha. Furthermore, its architectural value extends beyond just rarity within a certain neighborhood. The nominated property retains good overall integrity and readily exhibits the character-defining attributes of both the four-plex apartment type and the Sunlight and Air sub-type.

According to the MPD, four-plexes in Omaha are always two units wide and two stories in height, and account for:

...39% of flats that were constructed in Omaha. Over the years they have become more and more popular. Although they had small rises in popularity in the 1880s, 1910s and 1920s, they were most popular during and especially after WWII, likely due to their size and affordability. Typically arranged with a central entrance into a stair hall and two units per floor, these buildings were generally limited to two stories in height. They were rarely constructed in any type of formal arrangement.<sup>34</sup>

The Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street clearly meets this definition. The building is two stories high, two units wide, is arranged around a central stair hall, and was constructed independently from the buildings surrounding it.

While sixty-percent (157) of four-plexes constructed between 1880 and 1962 in Omaha are extant today, only twelve percent (3) are still standing in North Omaha.<sup>35</sup> These include the nominated property and four-plexes at 1609 Binney Street and 1608 Locust Street. The Atlas Apartments at 1609 Binney were designed by Charles W. Rosenberry in 1903. The building was surveyed in late 1980s, along with the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, but no determination of eligibility was made. The four-plex at 1608 Locust Street is still extant, but was not surveyed in the 1980s suggesting it did not meet the minimal level of historic integrity. Of the three extant four-plexes in North Omaha, then, only the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street have been recommended as individually eligible for the National Register.<sup>36</sup> The building's imposing double-decker porches, a hallmark of the Sunlight and Air Movement's influence on apartment design, were probably a significant factor driving the recommendation.

Like many architects designing multi-family dwellings during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Omaha's Richard Everett was obviously influenced by the progressive zeitgeist of the period. His apartment designs typically implemented the ideals of the Garden City Movement, such as creating green space. The related Sunlight and Air Movement was a response to tuberculosis that called for hospitals and living spaces with ample natural light and ventilation. Out of the former movement came the "garden apartment," with a focus on smaller building footprints and with larger setbacks. As such, garden apartments typically were building complexes or "L" and "U"-shaped buildings, and almost never four-plexes. Four-plexes, however, could accommodate the Sunlight and Air Movement just as easily as a garden apartment. In additional to ample

<sup>34 &</sup>quot;Apartments MPD," E-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> "North Omaha Study."; Alley-Poyner-Macchietto Architecture, "2009 04 22 Apts Final List," Unpublished Spreadsheet completed to accompany the MPD, "Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska." North Omaha is defined in this nomination as the area between the railroad (east), North 30<sup>th</sup> (west), Nicholas (south) and Pinkney (north).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> NeSHPO Survey and Inventory Database. The listing of this property in the National Register should not preclude the listing of other small-scale apartments, flats and duplexes like those at 2532 N. 16<sup>th</sup> Street or 1909 Binney.

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Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street Name of Property

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windows and ventilation, all the Sunlight and Air Movement required was outdoor/indoor living space, usually created by providing sun parlors or porches for each apartment unit. Garden apartments began appearing in Omaha around 1909 and remain popular today. The Sunlight and Air Movement, however, was much more specific and its popularity declined with the threat of tuberculosis. In Omaha, apartments designed in the Sunlight and Air Movement were popular from about 1910 through 1930.<sup>37</sup>

Of all the architects in Omaha known to be working in the Sunlight and Air Movement, only Richard Everett appears to have used it to guide his design of both garden apartments and four-plexes.<sup>38</sup> Selma Terrace, constructed in 1917 and designed by Everett, is a three story, "L"-shaped garden apartment with wall projections that provide each of the twenty-seven units with an enclosed sun room.<sup>39</sup> It was listed in the National Register for its association with the Sunlight and Air Movement in 2008. Two years earlier, however, Everett had designed the Marion Apartments, a four-plex, at 1812-1814 Maple Street in North Omaha. While not identified as a Sunlight and Air Apartment, its depiction on the 1934 Sanborn is very similar to that of the nominated property.<sup>40</sup> Both had two story porches. While the Marion Apartments are no longer extant to assess for their association with the Sunlight and Air Movement, what is clear is that Everett was still using the movement's guidelines in the late 1920s when approached to design a four-plex along North Omaha's prominent North 16<sup>th</sup> Street streetcar line. The Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street exhibit the characteristics of the Sunlight and Air Apartment sub-type, including the character-defining sun porch for each apartment unit accessed from the living room.

Between 1910 and 1930, at least ten four-plexes were designed in the Sun-light and Air Movement in Omaha, in comparison to twenty-seven garden apartments. Incredibly, all ten are still extant.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps their desirable sun porches saved them from demolition. These outdoor/indoor living spaces come in many different forms on four-plexes, from fully-enclosed rooms created by wall projects to completely open individual porches like those found on the nominated propperty. Of the nine other Sunlight and Air four-plexes, however, none are dominated so fully by their porch structure as the Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Moreover, the nominated property is the only one possessing the prototypical characteristics of both the four-plex apartment type and the Sunlight and Air Apartment sub-type within the traditional boundaries of North Omaha. It is, therefore, architecturally significant under National Register Criterion C at the local level as North Omaha's best surviving Four-plex and as an exceptional representation of the Sunlight and Air Movement as applied to a small-scale apartment.

<sup>37 &</sup>quot;Apartments MPD," In passim, E-10 through E-13.

<sup>38 &</sup>quot;2009 04 22 Apts Final List."; NeSHPO Survey and Inventory Database.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Honebrink, Jennifer and Jansen, Chris, "National Register Nomination, Selma Terrace," 2008.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> 1934 Sanborn Map of Omaha, Nebraska, Vol. 2, Sheets 245 and 249.

<sup>41 &</sup>quot;2009 04 22 Apts Final List."

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OMB No. 1024-0018

	Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street
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# Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street

Name of Property

# Douglas County, Nebraska

County and State

#### **10. Geographical Data**

Acrea	ige of p	property	Less than	1 acre		100				
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# **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/title Et	thel Mitchell			
street & numbe	r 12309 Justice Place	telephone	301-535-0381	
city or town	Glen Dale	state MD	zip code	20869-9177

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 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.

NPS Form 10-900a (8-86) OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Geograph	ical	Data
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Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street Name of Property

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Douglas County, Nebraska County and State

# **Boundary Description**

Hall Place Subdivision, Block 0, Lots 3 and 4, Omaha, Douglas, County, Nebraska

# **Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes all of the property historically related to the Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street.

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Photographs

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Apartments at 2514 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street Name of Property

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Photo 1 of 9. East façade with Porches and South Elevation, Aspect: NE

Photo 2 of 9. East Façade and North Elevation, Aspect: SW

Photo 3 of 9. North and Rear (West) Elevations, Aspect: SE

Photo 4 of 9. Central Stair, Aspect: E

Photo 5 of 9. Door and Screen between First-story Apartment Living Room and Porch, Aspect: E

Photo 6 of 9. Second-story Apartment, Living Room and Closet with Window, Aspect: SE

Photo 7 of 9. Second-story Apartment, Bedroom and Built-in Closet, Aspect: NE

Photo 8 of 9. Bath in Bathroom, Aspect: S

Photo 9 of 9. Second-story Apartment, Kitchen and Rear Entrance, Aspect: W

All photographs by Jessie Nunn, Nebraska State Historical Society. Photos 4, 8 and 9 were taken 02-07-2009. Remaining photos were taken on 10-29-2009.

### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street NAME:

MULTIPLE Apartments, Flats and Tenements in Omaha, Nebraska from 1880 NAME: -1962

STATE & COUNTY: NEBRASKA, Douglas

DATE RECEIVED: 7/16/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/18/10 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/02/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/30/10 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000607

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

no problemos

RECOM. / CRITERIA Accel A-C	
REVIEWER GIVE Children	DISCIPLINE
TELEPHONE	DATE

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



Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Omaha, Dauglas County, Nebroska Photo 10fg

# NeHRSI #: D009:0138-005

NE-Douglas County-Apartments 2514n16st\_0001



Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska Photo 2 of 9

# NettRS1 #; D009:0138-005

NE- Douglas County-Apartments 2514n16st-0002



Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Omaha, DouglasCounty, nebraska Photo 4 of 9

# NEHRSI #: D009:0138-005

NE-Douglas County - Apartments 2514/16st-0004



Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Onraha, Douglas County, No braslea photo 3 of 9

# Nethes1 #: D009:0138-005

NE-Douglas County-Apartments 25141 16st 0003



Apartments at 2514 N 16th St. Omaba, Douglas County, Nebrasica Photo 5079

# NeHRSI #: D009:0138-005

NE-Douglas lounty-Aptments 2514n16st-0005



Apartments at 2514 N 16th St Omoha, Douglas County, hebraska Photo 6 of 9

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Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska Photo 8 of 9

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NE-Douglas Country-Apartments 2514 n 16st\_ 0008



Apartments at 2514 N. 16th St. Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska Photo 7 of 9

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Apartments at 2514 N. 16th St. O maha, Douglas County, Nebraska photo 9 of 9

NettRS1 #: D009:0138-005

NE Douglas County-Aptments 2514/16st-0009







July 15, 2010

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

RE: Apartments at 2514 North 16th Street Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Loether:

Please find enclosed the National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the above resource. This form has met all notification and other requirements as established in 36 CFR 60.

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

Sincerely, 152

L. Robert Puschendorf Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure

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