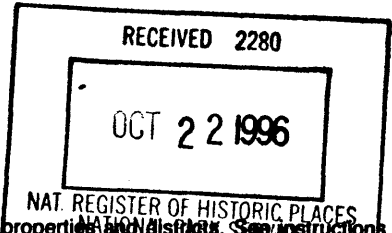


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1373

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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

1. Name of Property

historic name The Capitol Theater

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

2. Location

street & number 211 N. Third Street N/A  not for publication

city or town Burlington N/A  vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Des Moines code 057 zip code 52601

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia Oberkirch 10-17-96  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Edson H. Ball 11-22-96  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Entered in the  
National Register

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement

Art Deco/Moderne

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Wood

other

Narrative Description

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

Name of Property

County and State

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 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1937

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Wetherall and Harrison

Carl A. Nelson Company

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Downtown Partners, Inc. library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 660020 4519140  
Zone Easting Northing  
2         

3           
Zone Easting Northing  
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 Douglas E. Meck

organization Legends Entertainment Marketing, Inc. date May 31, 1996

street & number 213 N. Third Street, Suite 202 telephone (319) 754-6919

city or town Burlington state Iowa zip code 52601

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Douglas E. Meck and Tony C. Evans

street & number 213 N. Third Street, Suite 202 telephone (319) 754-6919

city or town Burlington state Iowa zip code 52601

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

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

The Capitol Theater  
Des Moines County, Iowa

Section number   7   Page   1  

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Occupying a prominent location in downtown Burlington within the central business district, the Capitol Theater is a one-story, rectangular shaped building measuring 51 x 117 feet, whose brick and terra cotta clad walls rest on concrete foundations, and is capped with a flat built up roof system that features wood sheathing and joists on wide flange steel beams. Stylistically, the building exhibits the influence of the Art Deco and Moderne modes. The influence of the former is apparent in the vertical emphasis of the building's front; the use of tiling to provide a series of set backs on the facade; the utilization of brightly colored terra cotta tiling to produce a rather dramatic polychromatic exterior to the building; and the zigzag effect along the roofline.

The Moderne influence is most apparent in the streamlined appearance of the marquee; the use of glass block windows on the facade; and the curved interior stairway with stainless steel trim.

The lobby of the Capitol Theater has a terrazzo floor and wood veneer walls with stainless steel trim. Abstract, free-form murals were painted on both the north and south walls. In checking with several local historians and reviewing many local newspaper articles, no evidence could be found with regard to the artist of the murals, or when they were done. The upper mezzanine floor is of steel and concrete. One minor problem is the rusting of steel in one location. With the exception of the relocation of one restroom and concession stand in 1969, the building has undergone little significant alteration.

The overall structural condition of the building is fairly good. There is minimal rusting on one of the primary steel beams spanning the building. The condition of the exterior walls is also reasonably good.

The Capitol Theater is a textbook example of the Moderne and Art Deco modes as applied to movie theater design, and is the only building of this style locally possessing such a high degree of integrity.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****The Capitol Theater  
Des Moines County, Iowa**Section number   8   Page   2  

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The Capitol Theater is significant as one of the best examples of Art Deco/Moderne design in Burlington, and perhaps even the state. It is a textbook example of those modes as applied to movie theater design, and is the only one locally or regionally with a high degree of integrity - and is one of a handful within the state. Designed by Roland T. "Tip" Harrison of the Des Moines architectural firm of Wetherall and Harrison in 1937, the Capitol was one of eight theaters designed for the Central States Theater Corporation between 1936 and 1939.

The Capitol Theater building is one the finest examples of Art Deco/Moderne design in all of Burlington and possibly even the state. In the 1930's the Des Moines based architectural firm of Wetherall and Harrison designed a total of eight movie theaters across the State of Iowa. Only the Capitol Theater in Burlington and the Charles Theater in Charles City retain such an incredibly high degree of integrity. The remaining six theaters have undergone extensive renovation both inside and outside. All of the original theaters were designed in the Art Deco/Moderne Style, yet only the two still reflect this historic style.

The facade of the theater has dazzling vertical tiling which extends the full height of the building to form an energetic zigzag line. The ornamental banding of the colorful tiling is symbolic of the extravagance of style. Metal and enamel often adorned the exterior of buildings at this time, and the Capitol Theater is an exemplar. Fantasy was a chief feature of the style. The elegance of the wood veneer walls with stainless steel trim and the intricacy of the terrazzo floor led the theater-goer into a "Hollywood" setting. These luxurious surroundings gave patrons an experience common to the movie stars they had come to see on the silver screen. The murals painted on two of the interior walls added to the grandeur. The graceful curve of the aluminum staircase epitomized the new wave of glamorous modernism.

The spirit of Art Deco and the beginning of the Moderne movement is perfectly represented by the Capitol Theater in Burlington, Iowa. The brash colors, the dynamic geometric juxtapositions and shimmering metallic surfaces matched the exciting and fast mood of the era, and is wonderfully maintained in this historic building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

The Capitol Theater  
Des Moines County, Iowa

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Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Mainstreet: A Guide To American Commercial Architecture. Preservation Press, 1987.

McCannon, Janet. Capitol Theater. Mainstreet of Burlington, 1990.

Smith Engineering Associates, Inc. Structural Walk-thru Analysis of Capitol Theater. Smith Engineering Associates, Inc., 1987.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

The Capitol Theater  
Des Moines County, Iowa

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Verbal Boundary Description

North 20.63 feet of Lot 366  
South 30 feet 4 inches of lot 367  
Original City of Burlington  
Block #141 of tract 1

Boundary Justification

The boundary selected is the parcel of land historically associated with the property.

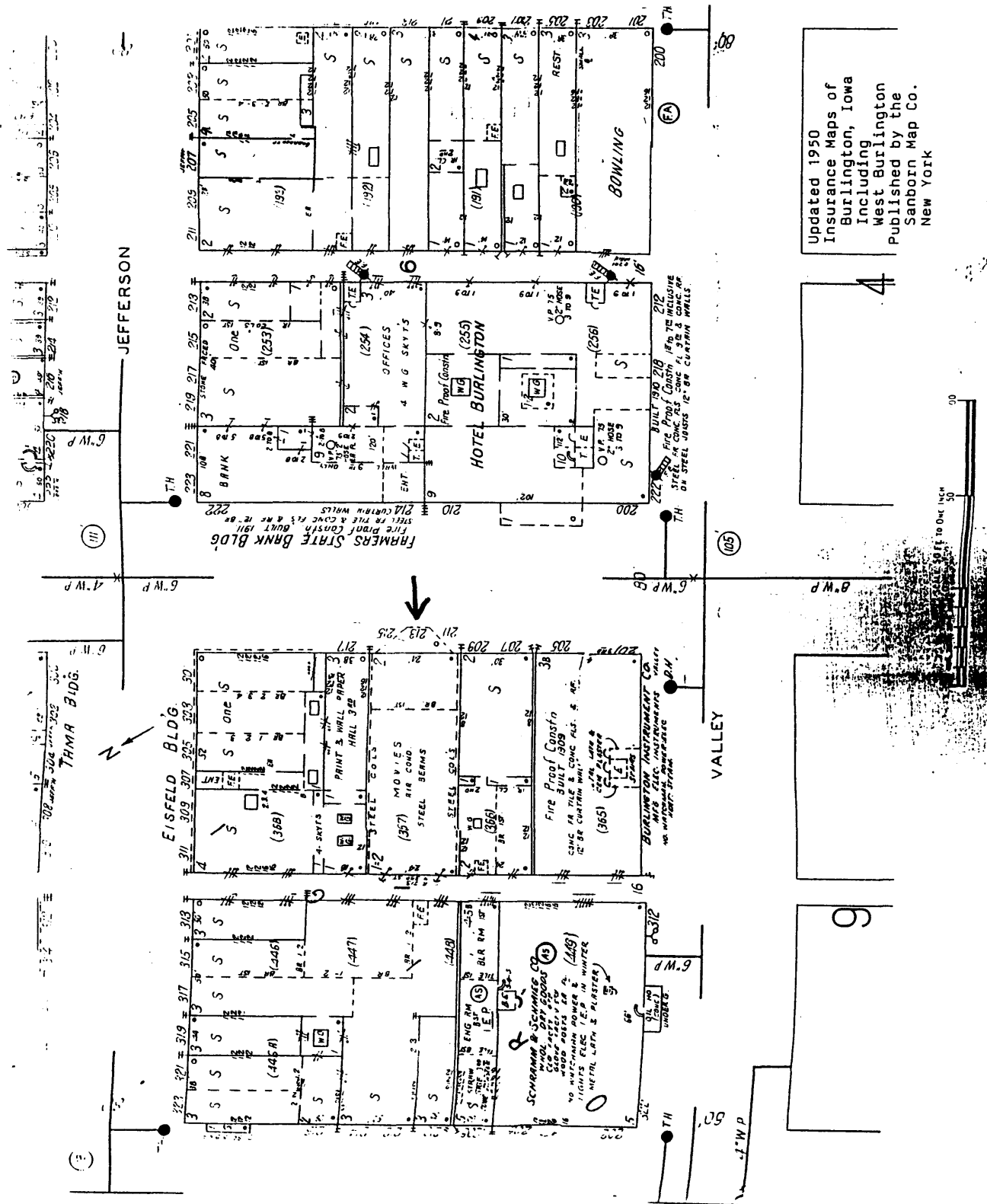


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National Park Service

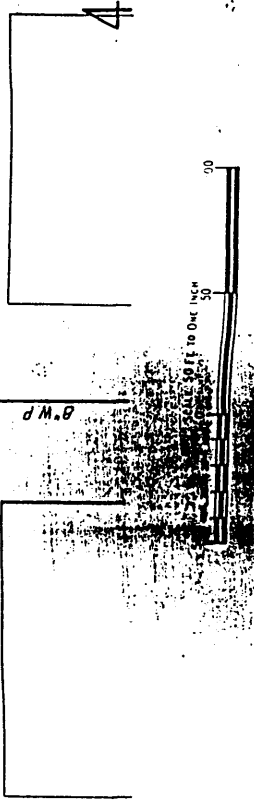
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

The Capitol Theater  
Des Moines County, Iowa

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Updated 1950  
Insurance Maps of  
Burlington, Iowa  
Including  
West Burlington  
Published by the  
Sanborn Map Co.  
New York



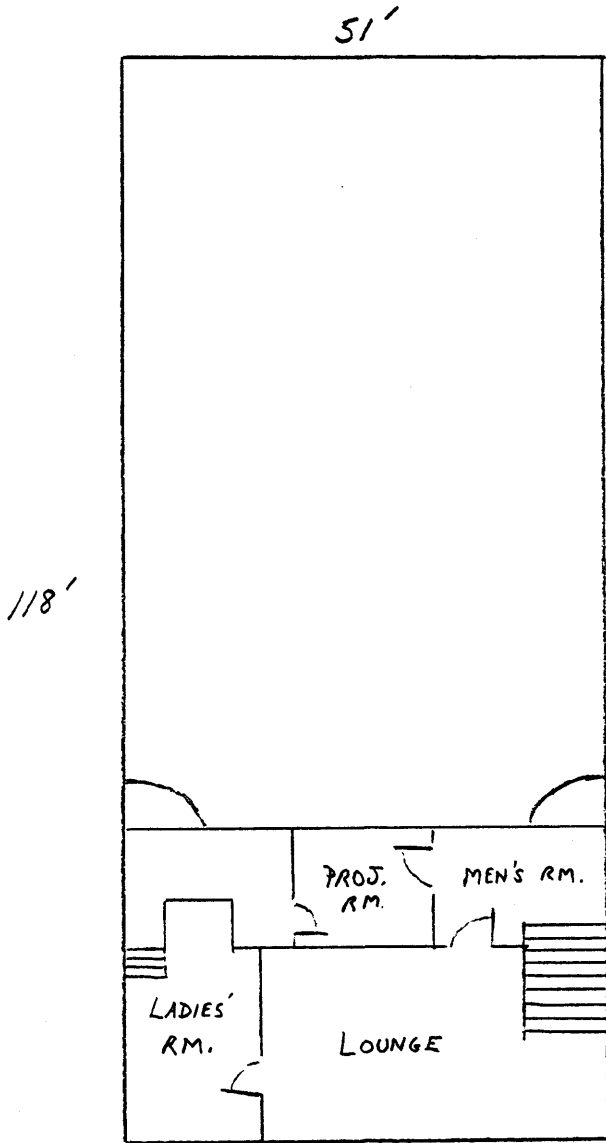
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

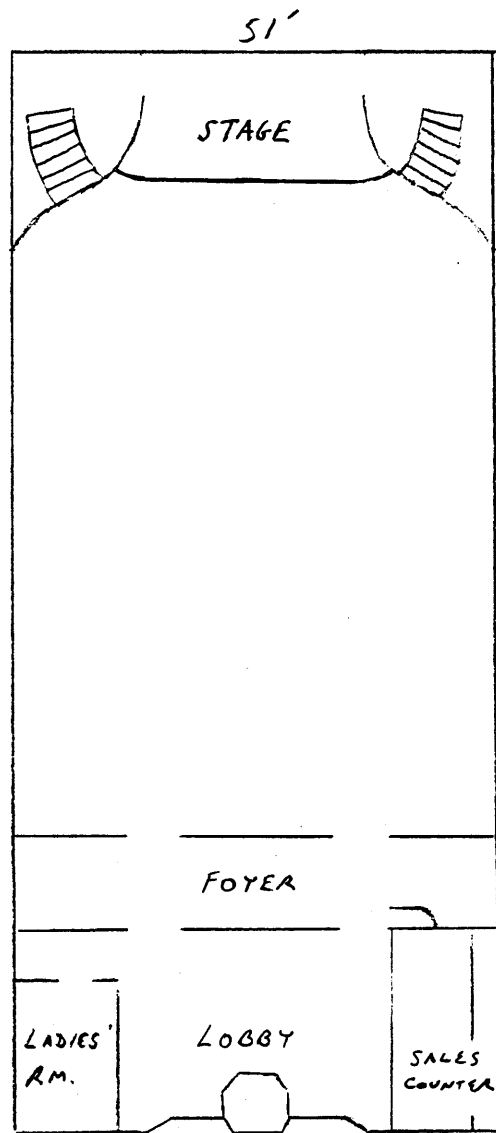
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

The Capitol Theater  
Des Moines County, Iowa

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MEZZANINE LEVEL



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