

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received APR 4 1986  
date entered MAY 8 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Palouse Main Street Historic District

and/or common N.A.

**2. Location**

street & number West 100, East 100 and 200 Blocks, Main Street not for publication

city, town Palouse vicinity of

state Washington code 053 county Whitman code 075

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Various - See attached Continuation Sheet

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Whitman County Auditor's Office

street & number Whitman County Courthouse

city, town Colfax state Washington

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Washington State Inventory of Cultural Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes  no

date 1974 federal  state county local

depository for survey records Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

city, town Olympia, state Washington

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The four block Palouse Main Street Historic District is a cohesive group of two and three story brick commercial structures, built between 1880 and 1920, which lies at the center of the small Washington/Idaho rural border city of Palouse. The great grain growing area, known as the Palouse Country, extends to the north, south and west of the city. The vast timber area of central Idaho lies to the east. Main Street itself bisects the City and extends on a level for nearly three-quarters of a mile, from east to west. Presently, and historically, Main Street is the sole commercialized street in Palouse. The North Fork of the Palouse River flows roughly parallel to Main Street, one-half block to the south, and has formed a small east-west running valley in which is situated the District.

Early descriptions of the District portray it as a marshy flat lying along the Palouse River. Between 1882 and May, 1888, when the town was first settled, Main Street was lined with one and two story vernacular wood frame buildings, generally with false fronts. After the fire of 1888, Main Street building stock and scale changed to larger brick structures. The 1891 city directory included the following businesses on Main Street: 2 banks, 2 newspapers, 3 hotels, 2 laundries (one was Chinese), 1 opera house, 1 post office, 6 grocery and/or dry goods stores, 4 physicians, 2 dentists, 3 attorneys, 2 photographers, 7 insurance agents, 1 bookseller, 2 milliners, 2 meat markets, 1 bottler, 1 brewery, 1 brickyard, 2 clothing stores, 1 confectionary, 2 harness makers, 2 hardware stores, 2 blacksmiths, 1 shoe store, 1 implement dealer, 2 drug stores, 2 restaurants, 1 undertaker, and 3 saloons.

There are now twenty-three buildings in the district: twenty-two commercial buildings fronting on Main Street, and one auxiliary building to the rear of the Oasis Cafe. Collectively, these buildings constitute the major commercial area along Main Street. All were constructed between 1888 and the 1920s. The principal fabric is brick, and the general height in the east three blocks is two stories, and in the one west block, one story. Setback is uniform from the wide street (approximately 15 feet), with most of the entryways recessed, including several with tile entry floors.

Despite the common fabric, setback and height, the buildings present a rich variety of detail work and individual vernacular styles. Eight different types of cast iron columns and pilasters in the District include rounded and rectangular shapes, fluted and decorative designs. Brick cornice design includes relief

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Block 2, Fitch's Addition to Palouse:

Map #1:

Lot 1 - Old National Bank of Washington, Fixed Asset Management, P.O. Box 3588 T.A., Spokane, Washington, 99220. SECURITY STATE BANK, 1892.

Maps #2 & 3:

Lot 1 (part), Lot 2 (part) - Juanita Ankcorn, Palouse, Washington, and Sherman and Jeanne Gigray, Palouse, Washington, 99161. ANKCORN BUILDING, ca. 1890; ANKCORN HARDWARE BUILDING, ca. 1910.

Map #4:

Lot 2 (part), Lot 3 - Robert D. and J. B. West, P.O. Box 246, Palouse, Washington, 99161. WHEELER BUILDING, ca. 1888.

Map #5:

Lot 3 (part) - Robert L. Watkins, Route 1, P.O. Box 234, Palouse, Washington, 99161. POST OFFICE BUILDING, ca. 1890.

Map #6:

Lot 4 - Oscar W. Pederson, Palouse, Washington, 99161; and Seattle First Mortgage Company, 4th and Blanchard Building, Seattle, Washington, 98121. BOONE BUILDING, ca. 1891.

Block 3, Fitch's Addition to Palouse:

Map #7:

Lot 4 - Richard Wekeman, P.O. Box 345, Palouse, Washington, 99161. WARNER BUILDING, ca. 1911.

Block 8, Fitch's Addition to Palouse:

Map #8:

Lot 5, Lot 6 (part) - Richard Schwake, P.O. Box 96, Palouse, Washington, 99161. LUCE BUILDING, ca. 1906.

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Map #9:

Lot 6 (central part) - Palouse Grain Growers, P.O. Box 118, Palouse, Washington, 99161. PALOUSE GRAIN GROWERS BUILDING, ca. 1916.

Map #10:

Lot 6 (west part), Lot 7 (part) - Cecil Howard, P.O. Box 114, Palouse, Washington, 99161. HOWARD BUILDING, ca. 1893.

Map #11:

Lot 7 (part) - Pillars Precision Printing, P.O. Box 155, Palouse, Washington, 99161. PALOUSE REPUBLIC BUILDING, ca. 1905.

Map #12:

Lot 7 (part), Lot 8 (part) - Effie Finley, P.O. Box 57, Palouse, Washington, 99161. FINLEY BUILDING, ca. 1890.

Map #13:

Lot 8 (part) - Melvin L. and Marjorie A. Robinson and John Nagle, Palouse, Washington, 99161. HEIN BUILDING, 1907.

Block 9, Fitch's Addition to Palouse:

Map #17:

Lot 5, Lot 6 (east 1/2) - Steven R. and Karen S. Swoope, P.O. Box 214, Palouse, Washington, 99161; George L. Hill, P.O. Box 142, Palouse, Washington, 99161; Velma A. Burke, Palouse, Washington, 99161. ST. ELMO HOTEL, 1888.

Map #16:

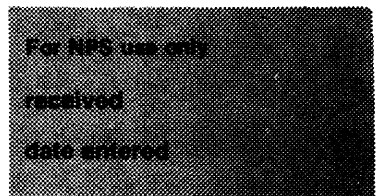
Lot 6 (part), Lot 7 (part) - City of Palouse, Palouse, Washington, 99161. FUSSY BUILDING, ca. 1890.

Map #15:

Lot 7 (part), Lot 8 (part) - Whitman County Historical Society, P.O. Box 67, Colfax, Washington, 99111. COLLARD BUILDING, ca. 1915.

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Map #14:

Lot 8 (part) - Robert L. Watkins, Route 1, Box 234, Palouse, Washington, 99161. BINNARD BUILDING, ca. 1888.

Block 10, Fitch's Addition to Palouse:

Map #18:

Lot 3 - Paul Byers, P.O. Box 7, Palouse, Washington, 99161. ICE HOUSE, ca. 1914.

Map #19:

Lot 5 (part) - Palouse Community Center, a non-profit corporation, Palouse, Washington, 99161; Kenneth O. Johnson, P.O. Box 186, Palouse, Washington, 99161. POWERS BLOCK, ca. 1890.

Map #19:

Lot 5 (part), Lot 6 (part) - Mark and Donovan Hellinger, Route 1, Garfield, Washington, 99161. POWERS BLOCK, ca. 1890.

Maps #20 and 21:

Lot 6 (part), Lot 7 (part) - Paul Byers, P.O. Box 7, Palouse, Washington, 99161. ESLICK BUILDING, ca. 1890; OASIS CAFE, ca. 1890.

Map #22:

Lot 7 (part) - Jeffrey L. Hill, Route 1, Box 136, Palouse, Washington, 99161. SEVER BUILDING, ca. 1892.

Map #23:

Lot 7 (part), Lot 8 - Dean E. and Lujane Herbert, P.O. Box 158, Palouse, Washington, 99161. WILLIAMSON BUILDING, ca. 1890.

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pattern (e.g., Palouse Grain Growers Building, map no. 9, ca. 1916), corbelled (e.g., Hein Building, map no. 13, ca. 1907), protruding corner pattern (Eslick Building, map no. 20, ca. 1892), plain projecting (e.g., Boone Building, map no. 6, ca. 1891) and decorative (e.g., Wheeler Building, map no. 4, ca. 1890). Additional detailing includes prism checked (purple glass) transept transoms (e.g., Williamson Building, map no. 23, ca. 1890), sawtooth soldier row brick pattern (e.g., Post Office building, map no. 5, ca. 1890), and arch radiating voussoirs window head surrounds (e.g., Powers Block, map no. 19, ca. 1890). In addition to brick, corrugated metal (e.g., Finley and Ankcorn Buildings, map no.s 12 and 2, ca. 1890) and cast stone (Howard Building, map no. 10, ca. 1893) are also present as building materials.

Two of the most distinguished buildings in the District are the St. Elmo Hotel (1888) (map no. 17) and the Security State Bank (now Old National Bank) Building (1892) (map no. 1). The St. Elmo Hotel is the district's only three-story structure, contains a mansard roof with decorative metal shingles, and still houses its original J. W. Reedy Company (1888) elevator. The building is brick, on a rectangular plan, with one cut away corner, and of the French Second Empire style. The eaves on the south and east facades have boxed cornices with frieze and brackets, all of metal. Fifteen Victorian segmental dormers are spaced along the street facades of the third story. The interior of the upper two floors is in a state of deterioration, but the segmental arch fenestration and the original storefront bays are still apparent on the exterior. In excess of twenty suites of varying size are on each of these two upper floors. Doors and windows are banded with fluted mouldings and plain corner ears on the second floor, with plain mouldings on the third floor. The center of the building contains a skylit court. The Security State Bank Building is a stalwart appearing two-story stucco over brick structure of the American classical revival style on the corner of Main and Bridge Streets. The stucco is scored to resemble stone. The Main Street facade is centrally pedimented and both the building's original entrances are flanked by pilasters. Fenestration includes twenty-one recessed, arched windows along both street facades. Those on the second story have been covered, while those on the first story retain their floral-motif leaded stained glass half-round windows.

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Adjacent to the Security State Bank Building is the unique Ankcorn Building (ca. 1890) (map no. 2). It is a small, two-story building and has original corrugated metal siding applied over wood construction. The metal cornice contains a dentillated frieze. The metal siding shows deterioration.

Other buildings of note in the District include the Warner Building, (ca. 1911) (map no. 7 ), with its boomtown roof and the Oasis Cafe (ca. 1890) (map no. 21) which has quarried granite interspersed with stretcher bond brick throughout the street facade. Its granite cornice is supported by corbelled brick; granite capitals lie in masonry piers; and a granite course is located above the transoms. With a tiled, recessed entryway, this building has been in use as a cafe since 1912. Directly behind the Oasis Cafe is the detached two-story, gable roofed rectangular ice house, (ca. 1914) (map no. 18), which served as a vital dependency of the Cafe.

Several of the interiors of the District buildings reflect features of architectural interest or elaboration. The St. Elmo Hotel (1888) (map no. 17), Powers Block (ca. 1890) (map no. 19) and the Ankcorn Hardware Building (ca. 1910) (map no. 3) have interiors originally illuminated by large skylights. The skylight of the Ankcorn Hardware Building remains intact. Pressed metal ceilings are located in the St. Elmo, as is that building's original 1888 elevator, and in the Ankcorn Hardware Building. This latter building has a brick rear flank addition which enabled its owner to practice his tinsmith trade. More predominant, however, are vernacular and functional interiors without ostentation.

The rhythm of the District's structures is interrupted only by the intersection of two streets (Bridge and Beach) and by two unobtrusive vacant lots having park type green spaces. The lots are nearly at opposite ends of the District. The easternmost of these lots once supported a single story structure similar in size and design to the adjacent Collard Building (ca. 1915) (map no. 15). No improvements are known for the westernmost of these two vacant lots. The cohesiveness of the district is virtually uninterrupted. Major alterations include the removal of the second story of the Binnard Building (ca. 1888) (map no. 14) and of the second story Main Street facade of the Williamson Building

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(ca. 1890) (map no. 23); and the partial covering with modern materials of the facades of several buildings (e.g., the Boone Building, (ca. 1891) (map no. 6), and the Luce Building, (ca. 1906) (map no. 8). The alteration to the Williamson building has left the original first floor store front, but modern wooden siding now covers the removed second story portion. Too, the Palouse Main Street Project has participated in a restoration of the original cast iron work on the first floor street facade of the Williamson building in an effort to lessen the visual impact of the second story alterations. Other alterations include cornice removal and store front entryway changes. Thus the overall condition of the District buildings presents a range from excellent (e.g., Security State Bank Building, map no. 1) to deteriorated (e.g., Power Block, map no. 19). However, the height, color, and setback uniformity impart a visual sense of the predominance of the original building stock, and give the clear impression of a western American boomtown Main Street of the 1890's, and of Palouse in a more prosperous era.

The buildings of the District can be classified as follows:

1) Primary structures: The two primary buildings in the district (the St. Elmo Hotel and the Security State Bank) are the architectural and historic landmarks of the district. Both buildings reflect strong pretensions to architectural high style, both structures are associated with important persons or events in the history of the district, and both structure retain good integrity. The St. Elmo Hotel, one of the few Second Empire style structures in the region, was a major element in the district when it was completed. Its construction precipitated the fire that leveled many of the one-story frame structures in the district while its completion signaled the commercial coming-of-age of the district. The Hotel was home to one of the first banks in the district, owned in part by Spokane financier A. M. Cannon. The Security State Bank, built in 1892, was the first office of Potlatch Lumber Company. Architecturally, the building is a good example of the classically inspired commercial design of the period.



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- a) St. Elmo Hotel (1888), map no. 17. See text for more detail.
- b) Security State Bank (1892), map no. 1. See text for more detail.

2) Contributing structures: The 16 contributing buildings in the district are modest commercial structures which still reflect, in part, their historic character. Although many of the buildings have lost some integrity, each of the contributing structures still retains elements of the historic fenestration patterns, storefront and entry configuration, decorative details (notably at the cornice, windows, or storefront level) and some of the original fabric. In addition, each of the buildings was constructed during the district's period of significance.

- a) Ankcorn Building (ca. 1890), map no. 2, is a two-story frame and corrugated metal sided false fronted building. The metal siding is original.
- b) Ankcorn's Hardware Building (ca. 1910), map no. 3, is a one-story brick building with recessed entryway and large interior skylight and pressed metal ceiling.
- c) Wheeler Building (ca. 1888), map no. 4, contains decorative brick cornice.
- d) Post Office Building (ca. 1890), map no. 5, is a two-story brick building with a decorative frieze.
- e) Boone Building (ca. 1891), is a large two-story brick building with a cutaway tiled entry at the corner of Main and Beach Streets, map no. 6.
- f) Warner Building (ca. 1911), map no. 7, is a single-story brick building with a boomtown roof shape and relief brick frieze detail.
- g) Palouse Grain Growers Building (ca. 1916), map no. 9, is a single-story common bond brick building providing brick and angled, recessed brick detail above the now-covered street facade transoms.
- h) Howard Building (ca. 1893), map no. 10, is a single-story cast stone structure with slender, cast iron columns dividing large Main Street glazing. An elaborate cornice includes cast stone showing a repeating wreath motif.
- i) Palouse Republic Building, (ca. 1905), map no. 11, is a small brick building containing a decorative cornice.

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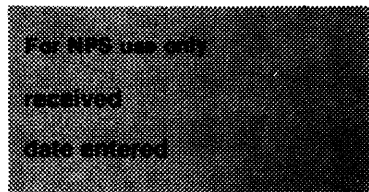
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- (j) Hein Building (ca. 1907), map no. 13, is a single story brick building with a corbelled cornice and cast iron columns along the street facade.
- (k) Collard Building (ca. 1915), map no. 15, is a long single story brick building with large plate glass storefront and transom windows, with a lath and plaster interior. It houses the Printing Museum of the Whitman County Historical Society
- (l) Ice House (ca. 1914), map no. 18, is a plain rectangular two story brick building, without fenestration and with large wooden doors.
- (m) Powers Block (ca. 1890), map no. 19, a large two story common brick building at the corner of Main and "K" Streets. The cornice is corbelled brick and fenestration is regularly spaced double hung sash surmounted with arched radiating voussoirs. The Main Street facade contains two recessed entryways, multi-paned transoms, and cast iron columns.
- (n) Oasis Cafe (ca. 1890), map no. 20, is a single story brick and stone structure with a recessed entry. The stone is quarried granite. Elaborate projecting cornice.
- (o) Eslick Building (ca. 1890), map no. 21, is a single story brick building with decorative brick courses.
- (p) Sever Building (ca. 1890), map no. 22, is a two story brick building with brick pilasters, decorative brick cornice, segmental arch street facade windows, and a storefront with transom.
- (q) Williamson Building (ca. 1890), map no. 23, is a two story brick building with brick pilasters, a decorative cornice, with transoms above the main storefront windows. The first story Main Street facade contains fluted cast iron pillars and recessed entries. Several second story bays have been obscured with non-historic siding.

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3) Non-contributing Buildings. The four non-contributing structures have lost all integrity of exterior fabric, fenestration, and storefront configuration and do not convey historic associations with the district's period of significance.

- a) Luce Building (ca. 1906), map no. 8, has had many alterations over the years, including the present covering of wooden paneling.
- b) Fussy Building (ca. 1890), map no. 16, the present City Hall for Palouse has modern metal siding applied over the original brick.
- c) Binnard Building. (ca. 1888), map no. 14, has had its original design and fabric completely obscured by stucco over facade, altered storefront and entry.
- d) Finley Building (ca. 1890), map. no. 12, has been resided with non-his-toric materials; storefront configuration does not reflect original period.

The District includes as a cohesive unit the historic commercial sector of Palouse. Beyond the District in any direction, drastic alterations, modern buildings, or lots vacant from destruction are apparent. The District boundaries were chosen to distinguish the original extant historic buildings, which survive as a unit, from those of the neighboring buildings and lots which have lost their historic integrity.

Open spaces: The district includes two open spaces. The easternmost space (map reference "A") is considered noncontributing to the historic character of the district. During the historic period, the lot supported a single story structure similar to the adjacent Collard Building (c. 1915). The westernmost space (map reference "B") is considered contributing to the historic character of the district. No improvements are known to have ever existed on the property, and thus the space reflects the historic pattern of development.

Total count of resources in district: 18 contributing buildings  
4 noncontributing buildings  
1 contributing open space  
1 noncontributing open space

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1888 - 1920      **Builder/Architect** Various

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Palouse Main Street Historic District encompasses the present and the historic commercial core of Palouse, Washington. The buildings of the District are a contiguous, cohesive and representative unit of what was once a larger commercial district in one of eastern Washington's principal pioneer era cities. The district rose to prominence in the 1880's, during an era of settlement, and its merchants and buildings continued to play a regionally significant role in commerce, trade and finance until at least 1920. The District buildings reflect a range of Victorian and early twentieth century commercial architectural styles and are a significant representation of that type and period of design.

Historic Background.

Euro-American settlement dates from 1869 when the Palouse River valley began to provide an abundance of lumber for the building demands of early regional settlers. In 1875, a town, named Palouse City, was started on the north-facing river valley slope across the river from the District. The town soon expanded to what the settlers felt were the limits of the hillside location. Consequently, during the winter of 1882, the principal commercial building stock was skidded downhill and across the then-frozen river to be relocated along the present Main Street. Considerable fill dirt was needed to raise the Main Street environs from a marsh. This tedious land filling allowed Palouse City commerce to expand greatly in the 1880's.

In 1887, the Northern Pacific Railway completed its line through Palouse City, thereby connecting it with its transcontinental line at Spokane Falls. In 1888, the town was incorporated as a city.

Commerce in Palouse City--particularly as related to lumber--continued to thrive, leading Palouse to become the principal center in eastern Whitman County. Palouse contained

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Kincaid, Garret D., Palouse in the Making, 1947, (Collection of articles published serially in The Palouse Republic, 1934), pp. 2, 20, 26.

(see attached continuations page)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3

Quadrangle name Palouse, WA-ID

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	4	9	4	1	3	0	5	1	9	4	9	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

1	1	4	9	4	3	8	10	5	1	9	4	0	10	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

1	1	4	9	4	1	1	3	10	5	1	9	4	9	14	10
Zone			Easting				Northing								

D 

1	1	4	9	4	3	7	10	5	1	9	4	9	16	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

1	1	4	9	4	2	1	2	10	5	1	9	4	9	12	10
Zone			Easting				Northing								

F 

1	1	4	9	4	3	2	10	5	1	9	4	9	10	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 1 through 4, Block 2; Lot 4, Block 3; Lots 5 through 8, Block 8; Lots 5 through 8, Block 9; Lot 3 and Lots 5 through 8, Block 10; Fitch's Addition to Palouse, Washington. (See attached continuation page)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n. a.	code	county	code
	n. a.			

state	n. a.	code	county	code
	n. a.			

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nicholas J. Manring and Deidre Busacca

organization Palouse Main Street Project date March, 1985

street & number P.O. Box 98 telephone (509) 878-1577

city or town Palouse, state Washington

telephone (509) 635-1551

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title DSHPO date 3.24.86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in 1986  
National Register

date 5/8/86

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration \_\_\_\_\_

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three sawmills and had another three within ten miles--all of which used the city as their distribution points. Too, Palouse was a key trading center for mining adventures along the upper Palouse River and its tributaries in the central Idaho panhandle. The principal ore was gold, although silver, iron and mica were also found. Mining--generally on a small scale--was associated with Palouse from its inception through the early 1900's. In 1892, it was reported that one of the banks in the city had annual gold dust purchases of \$25,000.00. At that time, Chinese immigrants were the principal miners, although the city provided investment groups from time to time which explored and operated mines in Idaho. In 1900, Palouse merchants went so far as to subscribe to the building of a road into the mining region.

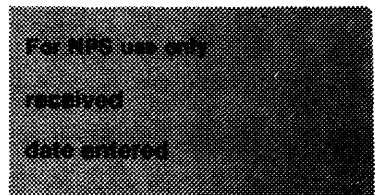
On May 17, 1888, virtually the entire original building stock of the District, and of east Main Street, was razed. The Preffer Hotel--standing where the Williamson Building is now--was ignited by sparks from a pile driver working on the nearby St. Elmo Hotel. Commerce appears not to have suffered, however. The city council enacted an ordinance proscribing wooden buildings along Main Street, and a virtual brick building spree ensued from 1888 to 1892. Brick (e.g., Powers Block, map no. 19, ca. 1890), brick and stone (e.g., Oasis Cafe, map no. 21, ca. 1890), and wood frame with metal siding (Ankcorn Building, map no. 2, ca. 1890), came to predominate along Main Street. Between 1880 and 1890, the city's population grew from 148 to 1119.

The 1888-1893 replacement and enhancement of Main Street building stock was aided by noted Spokane financier A. M. Cannon, who established two early banks in the District (1888 and 1889).

In the late summer and autumn of 1893, substantial rains prevented harvesting of area grain. That, coupled with the national Panic brought a halt to Cannon's financing, and to Palouse's first commercial boom. Two of the city's three banks failed, and the principal lumber company, the Palouse Mill company, fell into receivership. Within the next four years, most of Palouse's Main Street businesses had reverted to creditors (e.g., the St. Elmo Hotel in 1896), and the city's population decreased. It was not until the turn-of-the-century that grain prices buoyed, demand for lumber increased, and mining adventures were renewed.

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In the early 1900's, Palouse again experienced a boom period. In 1904, the Palouse Pottery Company, one of only two pottery plants then in the state, began commercial production in the city. The Potlatch Lumber Company--now Potlatch Corporation--began life in Palouse as the ultimate successor of the Palouse Milling Company. Its first headquarters was in office space in the Security State Bank Building. In 1905, the Palouse Flour Mill was expanded. A second railroad, the Washington, Idaho, and Montana Railroad--built under Weyerhaeuser company auspices to bring Idaho timber to its Potlatch Lumber Company mill in Palouse--connected Palouse to the Idaho woods in 1905. A third railroad, the Spokane and Inland Empire came into Palouse in 1907 and had a depot designed by noted Spokane architect Kirtland K. Cutter. This second boom period is manifested in period buildings within the District--e.g., the Hein Building, 1907, map no. 13, and the Ankcorn Hardware Building, ca. 1910, map no. 3, and in the city's population increase to 1544 at the 1910 census.

The local economy began to slow in 1910, when the Potlatch Lumber Company relocated its principal milling operations east to Potlatch, Idaho. With that move, thirty-five years of lumbering in Palouse came to an end. Mining, too, abated in this period, and Palouse was left to rely on its other industries, and the general farm economy for commercial sustenance. Since then, decline has been gradual. Circa 1920, U.S. Highway 95, Idaho's north-south highway, was completed through the panhandle area served by Palouse. That road opened the central Idaho panhandle to easy access to cities other than Palouse. Too, as with many rural communities, the increased use of automobiles has led local business patrons to larger cities for commerce. Palouse is now both a small farming community and a bedroom community principally to Washington State University, and, to some extent, to nearby Moscow, Idaho. The present use for the District buildings includes a number of small stores, one bank, one grain company office, three restaurants, one bar and two taverns. Several buildings are vacant.

A number of structures within the District have been associated with significant local or regional persons or enterprises. The St. Elmo Hotel was partially financed by A. M. Cannon, and he leased space for and established the Bank of

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Palouse City there in 1888. In 1892, he was the President of a successor bank, the First National Bank of Palouse, the first inhabitant of the Security State Bank Building. The Security State Bank Building is the site of the first office of the Potlatch Lumber Company. The Powers Block was undeniably a regional social center. Its opera house--with seating capacity of 600--provided a forum for speakers and entertainers, from governors to traveling theater troupes. The Binnard Building was built by the pioneer Jewish merchant, James Binnard. The more substantial granite faced Binnard Building in Colfax, Washington, is another area legacy of this family. The Collard Building now houses the Newspaper and Printing Museum of the Whitman County Historical Society.

Being associated with lumbermen, farmhands, and miners, Palouse's history has been replete with saloons and bars. The city had a reputation, which has remained tenaciously to the present, of a rough and tumble place on Saturday nights. In 1888, the city had four licensed saloons and in 1901, with a population of approximately 950, four saloons and a brewery. In 1904, The Palouse Republic opined:

"The police force has been busy the past week looking after drunken harvesters and hobos. Many will go to the harvest fields and work a week, then draw their wages and come to town to get drunk. Many have been driven out of town and others have been given time to reflect in the city Bastille."

Several buildings in the District are associated with this aspect of Palouse. The Collard Building, map no. 15, ca. 1915, was originally built as a saloon; the St. Elmo Hotel, map no. 17, has had, and presently does encompass, a bar; and it was at C. B. Eslick's bar in the Eslick Building, map no. 20, that Carrie Nation called and "delivered a piece of her mind" in May of 1910.

The four blocks of the district reflect the rich diversity of Victorian and early twentieth century commercial styles. The mansard roof with metal shingles of the St. Elmo Hotel is one of



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the few existing buildings in rural eastern Washington with such a roofline. In addition, the District includes two buildings of the simpler frame false-front style construction--the Finley Building and the Ankcorn Building, with its dentillated frieze. Exterior ornamentation may also be seen in the arched, stained glass windows of the Security State Bank (now Old National Bank) Building and in the full variety of wrought iron columns and lintel details. Significant interior details include two intact pressed-metal ceilings (St. Elmo Hotel and Ankcorn's Hardware Building), large skylights (St. Elmo Hotel, Powers Block, and Ankcorn's Hardware building), and the original elevator in the St. Elmo Hotel. The Palouse Main Street Historic District remains a cohesive unit aptly reflecting the city's earlier years and those associated with it, and one of the more intact small town commercial districts in eastern Washington.

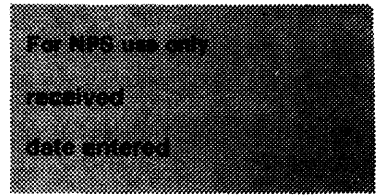
No archaeological sites are known to be within the District. However, the east end of Main Street is recorded as having joined a Native American trail, and other sites have been noted along the Palouse River in the vicinity.

Since November, 1983, a local volunteer group called the Palouse Main Street Project has been working to revitalize Main Street through historic preservation. In addition to preparing this nomination, a Project goal has been to enhance awareness of the history of Palouse through educational, demonstration, and promotional activities. To this end, the Project has displays of historic local photographs and artifacts in vacant storefront windows; had public talk and slide shows on topics such as commercial historic preservation, federal income tax benefits of preservation, and preservation easements; and has undertaken a "demonstration" building. This was a volunteer effort (nearly 200 hours) to help restore the first story, Main Street facade of the Williamson Building (ca. 1890).

The Project has researched and developed extensive historical data on Palouse. Too, the Project has received assistance from architecture and interior design faculty and students at Washington State University in inventorying and providing architectural descriptions of District buildings. The

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community has been very interested in and supportive of these efforts. Funding has been received from both public and private sources.

Perhaps as a result of Project activities, the St. Elmo Hotel was recently purchased by a Palouse couple concerned with the prior owner's intent to demolish the structure.

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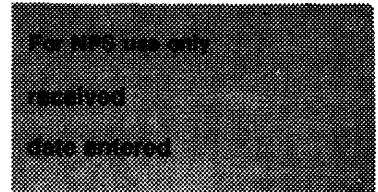
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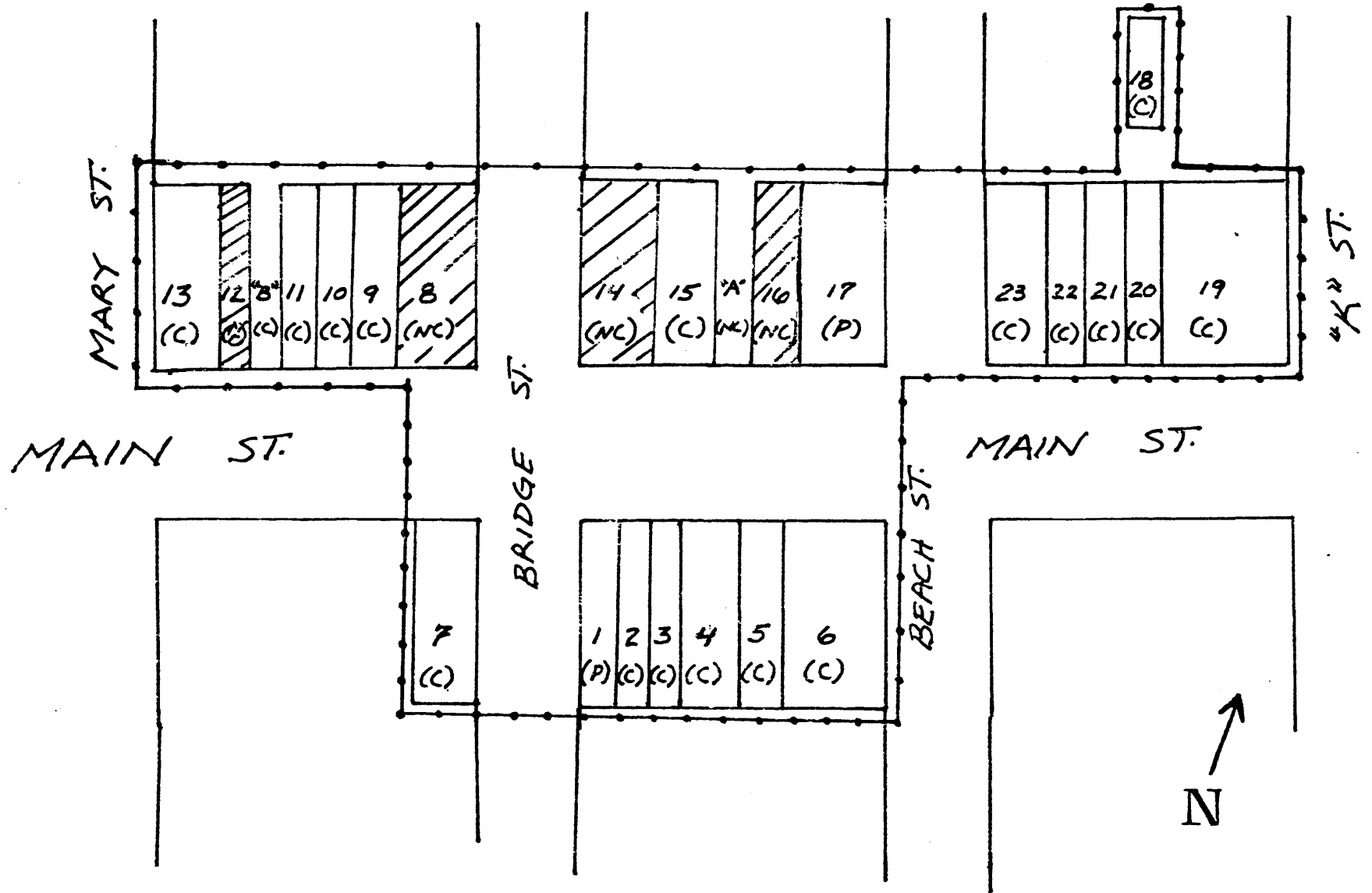
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The approximate metes and bounds description of the nominated District is as follows:

Commencing at the North West corner of the intersection of the unnamed street occasionally known as Mary Street and Main Street in Palouse, Washington, thence heading northwest along the east line of said unnamed or Mary Street 150 feet to the centerline (extended) of Block 8; thence east northeasterly along that centerline 670 feet to the west end of Lot 6, Block 10; thence northwesterly along the west line of Lot 3, Block 10 100 feet; thence northeasterly along the railroad right of way 50 feet; thence southeasterly along the east line of Lot 3, Block 10 to the centerline of that block; thence northeasterly along that centerline 80 feet to the westline of "K" Street; thence southeasterly along the westline of "K" Street 150 feet to the northline of Main Street; thence southwesterly along the northline of Main Street 260 feet to the westline of Beach Street; thence southeasterly along the westline of Beach Street 150 feet; thence southwesterly along the south line of Block 2 (extended) 360 feet to the east line of Lot 3, Block 3; thence northwesterly along the east line of Lot 3, Block 3 150 feet to the northline of Main Street; thence southwesterly 180 feet to the point of beginning.

All references to Lots and Blocks are to Fitch's Addition to Palouse, Palouse County, Washington.

# PALOUSE MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



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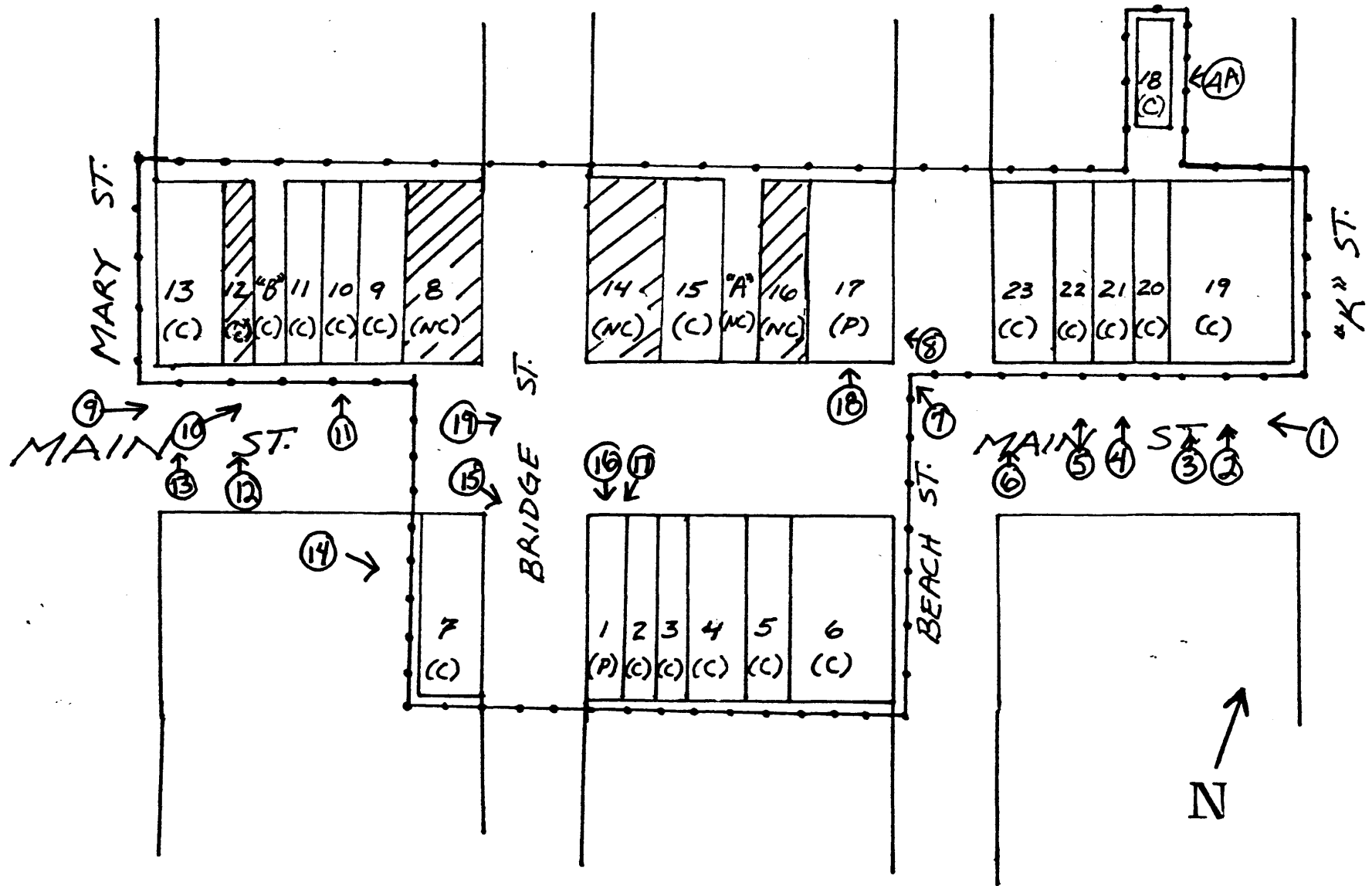
(P) = Primary structure

(C) = Contributing structure

▨ (NC) = Non-contributing structure

..... = District boundary

# PALOUSE MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



Key:

(P) = Primary structure

(C) = Contributing structure

▢ (NC) = Non-contributing structure

⋯ = District boundary

① = photo view