

## Wabash Avenue—East Historic District

## Multiple Ownership

Description:*Wabash Avenue East Historic District*

The Wabash Avenue—East Historic District consists of fourteen commercial buildings located near the intersection of Seventh Street and Wabash Avenue in downtown Terre Haute. These buildings all date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and range from two to ten stories in height, generally larger than those in the Wabash Avenue—West Historic District. Construction is generally of brick, with ornamentation achieved by means of cast-iron, pressed metal, stone, or terra cotta detailing. Representing some of the city's best architecture, the district includes a diversity of architectural styles, including examples of Italianate, Renaissance Revival, Romanesque, and Chicago style commercial buildings.

This area is well outside the city's original 1816 plat, and was predominantly rural in character through the 1850's. Some scattered development did occur, however, along Wabash Avenue after 1838, when the National Road intersected with Wabash just east of present-day Eighth Street. It was not until the 1870's and 1880's, when Terre Haute's population was increasing dramatically, that the area became completely developed. The structures which remain in the district are characteristic of the city's "golden age," which continued on into the first three decades of the 20th century.

Following are descriptions of some of the typical buildings located within the district, with numbers corresponding to the map code and photographs of each structure.

The Kaufman Block  
673-683 Wabash

Photo 38, Bldg. 105

This Italianate commercial building was constructed between 1863 and 1868 by Andrew Kaufman, a German immigrant who settled in Terre Haute in the late 1850's, and for many years it housed his grocery and liquor store. Prominently situated at the intersection of 7th Street and Wabash Avenue (the old National Road), it is a three story flat-roofed structure built of brick, with wood and limestone detailing. The ground floor of the Wabash Avenue (north) facade originally featured five cast-iron storefronts; most of these have since been removed or covered over. The upper two floors of this facade are divided into 16 equal bays; those on the second floor feature rounded arch windows with stone sills and hood molds, while the third floor bays contain segmental arched windows with similar stone sills and hood molds. Above the third floor windows is an entablature which includes a paneled frieze, ornate cornice brackets used in pairs, dentils, and a large projecting cornice. All of these elements are similarly employed on the 7th Street (east) facade, with the exception of the ground floor storefronts. Despite the remodeling of the northwest corner of the building, and after modifications, the Kaufman Block retains most of its design elements in good condition.

Terre Haute Trust Company  
701-703 Wabash

Photo 39, Bldg. 106

The Terre Haute Trust Company built this Chicago School structure in 1906. Faced with brick and limestone, the building is eight stories tall and faces north on Wabash Avenue. The major (north and west) facades are both organized vertically on a three-part design scheme. In the first section, consisting of the lower two floors, the limestone facade is divided into equal-sized bays by two-story pilasters decorated with acanthus leaves. These pilasters visually support an entablature with a projecting cornice. The second section, comprising floors three through seven, begins at this cornice line. Each of these floors is identical, featuring brick construction and large window openings grouped in pairs. Two stone belt courses cap this unit and form the base for the final design unit, consisting of the eighth floor, the cornice, and the parapet. The eighth floor is surmounted by a wide metal frieze decorated with cartouches and dentils; garlands hang from the cartouches to separate the eighth floor bays. The large, overhanging cornice features modillions and is surmounted by a low parapet wall. The Terre Haute Trust Company maintained their offices on the first three floors of this building from 1908 to 1934, with other professional offices located in the upper stories. The building was purchased by Merchants National Bank in 1934 and the interior was re-modeled in 1969.

The Tribune Building  
721-725 Wabash

Photo 40, Bldg. 107

The Tribune Building is a six-story brick and stone office building which faces north onto Wabash Street. It was constructed in 1912 to house the Terre Haute Tribune, a daily newspaper founded in 1894. Although constructed after the nearby Terre Haute Trust Building, its design shows little of the Chicago influence so pronounced in its neighbor. The ground floor of the building has been altered, although its cast-iron elements are still visible, and currently contains large plate-glass windows flanking a centrally-located main entry. A limestone cornice with dentils separates this level from the second floor, which is divided into three equal bays by piers constructed of rusticated limestone blocks. Each bay contains a grouping of three rectangular, one-over-one windows separated by pilasters. Another cornice, decorated with modillions, appears above these windows. The third, fourth, and fifth floors are each likewise divided into three bays by the brick continuations of the second floor piers; each bay contains three windows with limestone sills and lintels. The sixth floor is similarly divided but features round arched windows with limestone hood molds with keystones. The original cornice has been removed. This building still contains the offices of the Terre Haute Tribune, as well as those of its morning counterpart, the Star.

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Fort Harrison Savings Association Building  
724 Wabash

Photo 41, Bldg. 149

This narrow banking building was constructed in 1926 in the Neo-Classical style. The ground floor of the main facade features ashlar limestone construction with a centrally located main entry. A large statue of an American eagle stands guard over this entryway. The remainder of this facade is dominated by a huge multi-paned, rounded-arch window, flanked by paired limestone pilasters. These pilasters support an entablature with architrave molding, a plain frieze, and dentils. Surmounting the entablature is a monumental pediment featuring, in the tympanum, a roundel bearing the seal of the building's original occupant, the Fort Harrison Savings Association. This institution merged with another local savings and loan association in 1975; the resulting new company then constructed a new building and left this structure standing empty.

Bement-Rea Building  
726-730 Wabash

No Photo, Bldg. 150

This late 19th century commercial building, situated on the northwest corner of Eighth Street and Wabash Avenue, was built to house the office and warehouse of Bement-Rea and Company, a wholesale grocery firm founded in 1879. It was designed by Merrill Sherman, a local architect who began his career in 1894, after studying at the Rose Polytechnic Institute. A four-story structure with a flat roof, the building is constructed of red brick with limestone detailing. The main floor originally featured cast-iron detailing but those elements were either removed or covered over during subsequent ground-floor remodelings. The main facade is divided into three bays by brick piers rising from the foundation line to the parapet. Each bay on the second, third, and fourth floors contains a window unit consisting of three, one-over-one rectangular windows. Stone string courses stretch across this facade and form the sills of the second and third floor windows and the lintels of those on the second, third, and fourth floors. The interposing brick piers feature decorative brick and limestone detailing at the fourth floor level, and corbelled brick is also employed to create a frieze immediately above the fourth floor windows, below the parapet.

Worrell Building  
20 S. 7th

Photo 42, Bldg. 271

Dr. Jonathan P. Worrell had this three-story brick commercial building constructed in 1885 to serve as his medical office. Worrell, a physician who had arrived in Terre Haute from Pennsylvania in 1872, was well-known in medical circles for his work in the fields of ophthalmology and otology. Although the building actually has a flat roof, the main facade features a bell-cast, pyramidal-roofed tower surmounting the corner entry and, over the south pavilion, a mansard roof with iron cresting. The east facade, facing Rose Court Alley, features two frame oriel windows on the second floor. Limestone is used in the string course located above the second floor, and in all the window sills.

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Terre Haute House  
700-18 Wabash

Photo 43, Bldg. 272

The Terre Haute House is the third hotel since 1838 to be located at the north-east corner of Seventh and Wabash Avenue. Commissioned by Crawford and Edward Fairbanks in 1927-28, the hotel cost over \$1,000,000 to construct and occupied almost half a city block. Architectural work was by William Earl Russ, and William P. Jungclaus Company served as general contractor.

Designed in the Renaissance Revival style, the ten story hotel features an elaborate limestone facade on the first two floors. This section is rectangular in plan and features six Tuscan columns and other ornamental detailing. Floors three through eight, rising from this base, have a U-shaped plan and feature brick construction with relatively little ornamentation. The upper two floors, containing the penthouse, feature limestone detailing and a hipped red tile roof. Originally built to serve travelers, the building has been a residential hotel since 1970.

Swope Block  
19-31 S. 7th

Photo 44, Bldg. 253

The Swope Block is a three-story Renaissance Revival building located on the northwest corner of Ohio and Seventh Streets. Built in 1901, the building was designed by an Evansville architectural firm and was intended to provide retail space on the ground floor, office space on the second, and lodge rooms on the third. Two rooms on the second floor were also reserved for the residence of Sheldon Swope, the Terre Haute jeweler who owned the building.

The building faces east on South Seventh Street and features an elaborate limestone main facade. This facade is symmetrical around the center entrance pavilion, which features a round arched entrance flanked by fluted Ionic pilasters and surmounted by a pediment bearing the name and construction date of the structure. The vertical continuation of this pavilion features small rectangular windows on the second floor level, a pair of round arched windows on the third floor, and a pediment surmounting the entablature. The units of the building on either side of the pavilion are each divided into three bays; on the first floor each bay contains a storefront, while on the second and third floors each bay contains three identical rectangular windows separated by stone piers. All but one of the storefronts have been remodeled, but the upper floors retain their architectural integrity. The center window in each third floor bay is surmounted by an ornate pedimented window hood supported by consoles. The entablature features a paneled frieze and a cornice decorated with dentils.

Significance:

The Wabash Avenue—East Historic District is significant architecturally and historically as a relatively intact collection of commercial buildings in various 19th and 20th century styles. These buildings represent a number of businesses that made Terre Haute prosperous during the late 19th and early 20th

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## Significance, Continued

centuries. They also demonstrate the quality and diversity of the architecture that accompanied this development, and include in their number examples of the Italianate, Neo-Classical, Commercial and Renaissance Revival styles.

The Wabash Avenue—East area developed during a time when Terre Haute's population was increasing most dramatically. From a town of 8,600 in 1860, the population grew to number 16,103 in 1870, 30,217 in 1890, and 66,083 by 1920. This area east of the original town plat was only sparsely developed before 1850 but it became an important adjunct to the city's central business district after the Civil War. Many of the buildings which remain in the district were constructed by local firms which prospered during this time period. These include such structures as the Bement-Rea Building, constructed in 1889 to house a wholesale firm founded ten years earlier, and the Fort Harrison Savings Association Building, constructed in 1921 for a financial institution chartered in 1896. The Terre Haute Tribune, founded in 1894, was successful enough by 1912 to erect the six-story Tribune Building (107). Local merchants and entrepreneurs also constructed buildings in this area; the 1901 Swope's Block (253) stands as an example of this type of speculative development.

Architecturally, the area features a wide diversity of styles. The oldest buildings in the district, such as the Kaufman Block (105) are of Italianate design, with ornate cornices and segmental or round-arched windows. The buildings at 26-28 (269) and 22-24 South Seventh show the transition from Italianate to functional; their stamped metal cornices are smaller and less elaborate, and their windows are rectangular and lack the elaborate hood molds. Among the district's 20th century buildings are several Renaissance Revival structures, including Swope's Block, with its handsome limestone facade, and the Terre Haute House, the latest of a series of three hotels located on the northeast corner of Wabash and Seventh since 1838. Other notable structures in the district are the Chicago-style Terre Haute Trust Company, the neighboring Tribune Building with its Romanesque Revival detailing, and the Neo-Classical Fort Harrison Savings Association Building.

The Wabash Avenue—East Historic District has retained its architectural integrity to a remarkable degree. With only one parking lot and no non-contributing buildings located within its borders, it remains one of Terre Haute's most complete historic commercial areas.

Geographical Data

Acreage: Approximately 4 acres

Quad: Terre Haute 1:24000

UTM References: A 16/465100/4368480  
B 16/465100/4368320  
C 16/464920/4368320  
D 16/464920/4368480

Wabash Avenue—East Historic DistrictMultiple OwnershipVerbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northwest corner of the property located at 7-15 S. Seventh Street (272); then proceeding east along the northern property line of this property to the north property line of the property at 720-722 Wabash (148); then east along the north property lines of those buildings fronting on Wabash to Eighth Street; then south along the west curblin of Eighth Street to the alley located between Wabash and Ohio Streets; then west along the north side of this alley to the northern extension of the east property line of the property located at 20 S. Seventh Street (271); then south along the east property line of this and adjacent properties fronting on Seventh Street to Ohio Street; then west along the north curblin of Ohio Street to the southern extension of the western property line of that property located at 19-31 South Seventh Street (253); then north along this line to the alley located between Wabash Avenue and Ohio Street; then west along the northern edge of this alley to the west property line of that property located at 673-683 Wabash (105); then north along that line to Wabash Avenue; then east along the south curblin of Wabash Avenue to Seventh Street; then north along the east curblin of Seventh Street to the western extension of the northern property line of the property at 7-15 S. Seventh Street; then east along this line to the point of beginning.

East Wabash District Building Inventory

<u>Building Number</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Building Name</u>
105	673-683 Wabash	Kaufman Block
106	701-703 Wabash	Terre Haute Trust Company
107	721-725 Wabash	Tribune Building
108	727 Wabash	
148	720-722 Wabash	
149	724 Wabash	Fort Harrison Savings Association
150	726-730 Wabash	Bement-Rea Building
253	19-31 S. 7th	Swope Block
254	683 Wabash	
268	30-32 S. 7th	
269	26-28 S. 7th	
270	22-24 S. 7th	
271	20 S. 7th	Worrell Building
272	700-718 Wabash	Terre Haute House