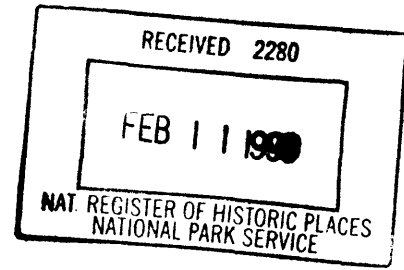


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



303

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 Union City Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number roughly bounded by W. Oak, N. Union, W. Smith and N. Howard Streets N/A not for publication

city or town Union City N/A vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Randolph code 135 zip code 47390

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 36CFR 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson D. Beall 3-13-99

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
53	13	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
53	13	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

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Hotel

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store

COMMERCE/TRADE: Financial Institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant

GOVERNMENT: Correctional Facility

GOVERNMENT: Government Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof ASPHALT

other METAL: Tin

Narrative Description

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

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1870-1948

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Indiana Sites and Structures Survey

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approx. 16 Acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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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 John Warner

organization Weintraut & Nolan Historians, Inc date 03-09-98

street & number 800 Sugarbush Ridge telephone 317/ 873-6692

city or town Zionsville state IN zip code 46077

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Union City Commercial Historic District
Randolph County, Indiana

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SECTION 6 Function or Use

Historic Function

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

SOCIAL: meeting hall

GOVERNMENT: post office

GOVERNMENT: fire station

RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater

HEALTH CARE: medical business/office

Current Function

HEALTH CARE: medical business/
office

GOVERNMENT: post office

SECTION 7 Description

Architectural Classification

LATE 19TH and EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

The Union City Commercial Historic District encompasses the downtown area and contains a small but significant collection of buildings that reflect the architectural styles prevalent during the community's greatest period of economic prosperity, 1870-1940. Comprised primarily of Italianate Commercial and Commercial Vernacular style buildings, the district also includes a number of Romanesque Revival and Neoclassical structures along with a number of non-contributing resources. The district contains 53 contributing buildings, 13 non-contributing buildings. The Kirshbaum building, previously listed in the National Register, is not included in the total count. A map showing the locations of these buildings accompanies this nomination.

The intersection of the Big Four and the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati & St. Louis railroads at Union City energized the city's economy and doubled its population to 3,000 residents in a short six-year period (1870-1876). This boom period is reflected in the district. Frame buildings from the early years gave way to more substantial and architecturally significant structures of brick, limestone, and cast metal. The Kirshbaum Building (photo 2) and the J.K. Building (photo 3) are notable examples of the Italianate Commercial style. The Jackson Building (photo 3) and the building at 216-218 W. Pearl (photo 6) are exceptional examples of the Commercial Vernacular style that incorporates utility with extensive architectural detailing. The Grazhs Building (photo 5) is an example of the Romanesque Revival commercial buildings found in many mid-west towns in the late nineteenth century. Photograph 10 is a view outside of the district to the southeast.

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Although Union City owes its existence and its economic viability to the surge of railroad building and operations in mid to late nineteenth century, there is limited physical connection (except for the switching building) associated with this period and the buildings that remain in the district. The once-active Big Four round house and stock yards are no longer extant. However, a review of the businesses prevailing in downtown Union City in the mid-to-late-nineteenth century clearly indicates the impact railroads made on the community. Wholesalers such as the Kuntz Lumber Yard, dependent on the railroad for transportation of its products, and various hotels and rooming houses providing lodging for workers and travelers viewed the railroad as their life blood. In the early twentieth century, retail establishments in the district such as butcher shops, drug stores, and paint and wallpaper stores rubbed shoulders with service-oriented businesses such as barber shops, an undertaker, a tea shop, tailors, millenary shops, and banks. With the introduction of automobiles and motion pictures, livery stables gave way to garages and service stations, and movie theaters began to sprinkle the district.

West Smith Street is the north-south street and North Union Street is the east-west street for building addresses.

The Italianate Commercial building at 310 W. Oak (photo 1) embodies many of the architectural details unique to the style. At street level, simple brick pilasters divide the facade into four bays, three equal size and the right bay narrower, containing two large rectangular windows with a band of divided lights across the top, and three entry doors. The flank pilasters have limestone bases and all have plain limestone block capitals. The large window openings have limestone sills and flat brick lintels; the wooden frames, which appear original, contain fixed sash, single-glazed windows. The top band contains ten individual panes. Paired entry doors appear in the center left bay and one in the right-most bay. The paired doors have single large lights and appear original. The right-most door is the same construction, but has a modern aluminum storm door outside. A wide plain limestone band separates the first and second floors of the facade.

The second floor facade contains three large, evenly distributed windows, decorative brick corbelling, and an ornate cornice with pediment. Brick pilasters, with limestone bases, flank each side of the facade. Ornatly scrolled and fluted brackets crown each pilaster and anchor the ends of the cornice. Each arched window-opening surround consists of limestone sills, limestone-based brick pilasters on each side, and inverted U-shaped hooded crowns with decorative

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keystones. The double-hung wooden sashes are glazed one-over-one. The entablature consists of a corbelled-brick architrave, a band of six corbelled-brick arches impressed to give depth to the frieze, and a plain stepped cornice. Crowning the building is a centrally positioned decorative pediment inscribed with the date 1893.

The Raphael Kirshbaum Building at 201-203 N. Columbia (photo 2) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This outstanding example of Italianate Commercial architecture, built in 1880, was achieved by constructing a single symmetrical facade across the front of two smaller buildings. The store functioned as Union City's premier department store. The three-story brick building dominates the intersection of W. Pearl and N. Columbia Streets. The main facade consists of a large storefront collection of display windows and two entries at street level, topped by two floors of large windows. The facade above street level has three bays; large bays right and left of a narrow central bay. A massive overhanging cornice crowns the building.

At street level, large single-glazed display windows and single door entries flank a smaller central display window; the windows extend upward through two-thirds of the wall height. A multi-light transom of prismatic glass extends across the facade above the display windows and connects decorative fluted pilasters at each corner of the building. Immediately above the transom and visually separating the first and second floors of the facade is a small projecting cornice-like ledge supported by block modillions that continues around the corner of the building to accentuate the limits of the display front. The small fluted pilasters on either side of the central display window delineate the recessed entryways into the first floor space. The wooden single entry doors are single-glazed and appear original. A plain, paneled, single wooden door at the far right of the facade leads up to the second floor. Above the first floor, the large right and left bays are symmetrical and identical in fenestration. Grouped in threes and separated by brick mullions, the Gothic arch window opening surrounds have brick sills, flush sides, and pressed tin Gothic-arch hooded crowns: the second and third floor window detail is identical. The wood framed, double hung window sashes are glazed One over one. The windows in the narrow central bay are slightly shorter in height than those in the large bays but all other architectural details are the same. The name "Kirshbaum" appears directly above the third floor central bay windows, between large ornate brackets supporting the cornice. A bracketed frieze, broken over the central bay, supports a massive projecting cornice.

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Next door to the Kirshbaum Building at 205 N. Columbia (photo 3) is the Jackson Building. Built in 1892, this Commercial Vernacular building is a good example of a style that combines utility with minimal architectural detail. Although the street-level portion of this two-story building's main facade is altered, the second floor provides evidence of original architectural design. The first floor facade is surfaced with a veneer of fieldstone. The present entryway door and windows are not original. A modern square, overhanging awning, inscribed with the firm's name protects the first floor exterior wall from the weather. A band of exterior wall and a projecting belt course (water table) visually separate the first and second floors. Four brick pilasters, with rough-faced stone bases, divide the second floor of the facade into two distinct identical bays: one on each side of a narrow projecting central bay with no fenestration. Within each bay are three tall and narrow outlines of previous window openings. The center opening is completely bricked-in; the flank openings are reduced in size by the same technique to provide framing for double-hung, single-glazed small windows. Above the windows and across the entire facade is a belt course of corbelled brick that renders the appearance of brackets supporting a plain frieze and cornice. The cornice consists of a broad band detailed with dentil-like impressed design and four small fluted brackets; two anchor the ends of the cornice and two define a central space with "JACKSON BLD" and "1892" inscribed on it.

Although the street level portion of the Italianate Commercial Building at 207-209 N. Columbia (photo 3) is altered significantly, the second floor of this two-story building retains many of the architectural details identified with this style. The storefront windows and entryways are altered with modern metal frames and glazing. A shingled overhang protects the entryway of 209 N. Columbia. The second floor of the building retains its original fenestration and other details. Three fluted pilasters separate the facade into two distinct bays. The exterior wall of the facade is rough-faced stone block. A prominent bracketed cornice crowns the building. The left bay contains two rectangular window openings. The window surround consists of stone sills, small fluted pilasters on the sides and the mullion in between, and an entablature over both openings. The double-hung single-glazed windows, surmounted by a fixed sash, single-pane transom light, appear to be original. The right bay contains a ribbon of three windows capped with a Palladian-shaped light. The arched window opening surround is rough-faced stone with an elaborated keystone. The mullions separating the window sashes are small wood pilasters. The double-hung, single-glazed sashes appear to be original. The fanlight above has eight lights with wood muntins. The frieze

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and cornice have three large fluted brackets, one centered and two that anchor the ends; smaller brackets support the projecting cornice.

The J. K. Building, built in 1889, at 235 N. Columbia (photo 4) displays a number of unique architectural details that epitomize the Italianate Commercial style. The street level portion of the facade is altered. Original fenestration is replaced by a modern picture window, modern aluminum entry doors, and a shingled overhang that obscures the right one-third of the facade. The upper floor of this two-story brick building appears to be original in all details. Six tall, narrow window openings are evenly distributed across the second floor of the facade. The window surrounds consist of brick sills, flush brick sides, and elaborate bracketed pediment crowns. Distinctively designed, the crowns create a swag-like effect for the lintel. Detailing within the triangle of the pediment, decorative brackets, and a scrolled device at the peak imparts a decorative touch to the facade. A belt course of corbelled brick appears between the window crowns and the metal frieze and cornice. The frieze and cornice are anchored at each end by large fluted brackets crowned with spherical devices. Smaller brackets and intervening decorative medallions along the frieze support the projecting cornice. Centered and above the cornice is a highly decorated pediment with "J. K." and "1889" inscribed at the base. Decorative scrollwork appears at the sides and the top of the pediment.

Next door to the J. K. Building at 239 N. Columbia (photo 4) is one of the few examples of Neoclassical styling extant in the district. Built at the turn of the century, the building adheres to the monumental size and sparing application of ornamentation that characterizes the style. The street level portion of the facade is altered to the extent nothing remains of the original fenestration. Large display windows in modern metal frames, metal and glass entry doors, and an imposing shingled overhang dominate the first floor. The second floor of this two-story brick building retains some of the architectural details that graced the edifice. Nine square brick pilasters divide the second floor exterior wall into eight bays. The bases of the pilasters are stone. A single belt course of stone that connects each base is a remnant of the original stone sills for the windows between each pilaster. The original window openings are boarded over with vertical board siding such as T1-11. A wide belt course of rough-faced stone extends across the facade and also connects the pilasters. This course is a remnant of the stone lintels that were part of the original window opening surrounds. Simple stone capitals top each pilaster. In bays 2, 3, 6, and 7 formed by the pilasters, modern double-hung, single-glazed windows are installed. The pilasters support an

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entablature that consist of a flat architrave, a corbelled brick frieze, and a plain brick cornice.

The Italianate Commercial buildings at 224 and 226 N. Columbia (photo 5) are relatively plain structures with modest stylistic detailing. Identical window treatments, uniform exterior wall surfacing, and a shared frieze and cornice create the impression of a single building rather than two separate structures. Modern windows and entry doors with a prominent shingled overhang that protects the storefronts alter the street level portion of the facade. The second floor exterior wall of this two-story building is sheathed in rough-faced stone with two full-arched window openings left of center and three full-arched openings right of center. Surrounding all five window openings consist of stone sills, plain flush sides, and inverted U-shaped hooded crowns with elaborated keystones. The top of the arch portion of the left-most windows is filled-in with solid material; the fanlights on the other three windows are original. All five windows are double-hung, single-glazed in wood frames and appear original. A bracketed frieze supports the simple and projecting metal cornice with modillions between each bracket.

The building at 216-218 W. Pearl (photo 6) is predominantly Commercial Vernacular in style, but further demonstrates the use of Italianate details to heighten the visual appeal of a basic brick commercial. Constructed in 1893, the street level area of the facade is altered with modern window frames, glazing and entry doors. A modern umbrella-like overhang protects the recessed entryways from the weather. The remainder of the facade, primarily the second floor of this two-story brick building, retains most of its integrity. A broad metal belt course, with a return at the corners of the building, visually separates the first and second floors. Three full-height pilasters, center and at both corners, divide the facade into two symmetrical bays. The corner pilasters are crowned with small square turrets. Each bay contains four square window openings with rough-faced stone sills, flush sides, and flush lintels. The presence of two flat surfaces above the current openings suggests the openings were modified by filling in the upper portion of the opening and adding a transom light to accommodate the double-hung, six over six glazed sashes presently in use. Further evidence is apparent in the presence of rough-faced stone blocks placed between each opening and the prominent belt course of rough-faced stone that formed the lintels above the original openings. Bracket-like details of corbelled brick support an ornate, moderately projecting cornice. Fluted square turrets anchor both corners and returns of the cornice with pyramidal tops corbelled from the exterior wall.

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Centered and extending above the cornice is a pediment, flanked on both sides by the decorative turrets. Within the angle of the pediment is inscribed the date "1893" and architectural detailing that resembles a sunburst.

The Grazhs Block at 214-216 N. Columbia (photo 5), built in 1893, is one of the few examples of the Romanesque Revival style present in the district. The street level storefronts are altered. Modern display windows, metal frames, non-original doors in the entryways, and a shingled wooden overhang obscure the integrity that might remain in the first floor portion of the facade. The second floor of this two-story brick building is altered to some extent but retains significant stylistic details. Four brick pilasters, one at each corner and a pair in the center, divide the building into three bays. Rough-faced stone blocks accentuate the pilasters at regular intervals through their entire length. The left and right bays are identical. A central full-arch window opening dominates the flank bays. The opening surround consists of rough-faced stone sills, brick arch springs, and large rough-faced stone arches. In-fill of T1-11 board siding and a ribbon of three modern windows replace the original windows in the opening. The windows are double-hung and glazed one over one. The center pair of pilasters is the sides of a window surround for an opening that is boarded-up with T1-11 siding. The tall narrow window opening, with a rough-faced stone lintel still visible, is positioned over a central entryway leading to the second floor. Above the arches, bracket-like brick corbelling extends across the entire facade. A decorative frieze of inset brick panels and projecting cornice crowns the building. Centered on the cornice is a simple pediment with the date "1893" inscribed within the angle; smaller pediments delineate the lateral limits of the cornice.

The Shank Block at 302 N. Columbia (photo 7) is an example of the mingling of details from architectural styles such as Italianate, Romanesque Revival, and Commercial Vernacular. Situated at the corner of W. Oak and N. Columbia Streets, the main entryway is in the angle of the sidewalk, its long axis east-west, and its placement suggests additions to the main building, but *Sanborn* maps indicate a single structure. The two-story brick building is in excellent condition. With the exception of a missing balcony over the entrance, and possible obscuring of transom lights over the display windows, the building appears to retain significant integrity. The street level storefront fenestration is original. The square metal fluted pilasters that flank the double door entrance dominate this portion of the facade. Extending upward to a metal I-beam that probably supported the missing balcony, the first-floor pilasters and the corbelled brick extensions create a tall narrow bay which includes a second floor single-door

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entrance that serviced the balcony. A boarded-over transom occupies a space above the door opening. The second floor of the primary facade and contiguous sides walls are adorned with three belt courses of rough-faced stone which delineate the sills, lintels and midpoints of the window openings in all three contiguous walls. Window openings in the corner section of the building are rectangular with flat lintels; openings in the section that faces south (W. Oak side) are also rectangular but have segmental arch, brick lintels. This section of the exterior wall also contains five simple brick pilasters that divide the wall into four bays. Each of these bays contains window openings. The three bays on the right have small square window openings and double-hung, single-glazed sashes in the first floor. The double-hung, single-glazed windows and boarded-over transom lights of the second floor appear original. Above the window openings is a broad band of corbelled brick that extends across the main facade and around the corner to the rear of the building. The corner section of the building is crowned with an elaborately ornamented metal entablature above a plain architrave with the name "TIMES" prominent in the faceted corner, a dentil frieze, and a projecting cornice. The ends of the cornice are embellished with small pediments. Crowning the cornice and centered above the main entryway is a square pediment-like projection which provides visual height to the building. The W. Oak portion of the exterior wall is crowned with a simple brick projecting cornice. Raised elements along the cornice line create the visual image of castellations that might be seen in Gothic Revival buildings.

The Commercial Vernacular building at 317 W. Oak (photo 8) possesses a high degree of architectural integrity. Built in the late nineteenth century, this two-story brick building retains an unusual architectural feature, a cantilevered balcony. With the exception of minor alterations to the street level storefront such as a modern door to the upper floor and a boarded-over display window, this portion of the facade is exceptional in its integrity. Square fluted pilasters on the first floor divide this section of the facade into three bays; display windows in the right and left bays and a recessed entryway in the center bay. The entryway contains small angled sections of display glass and three doors. The wooden doors into the storefront areas of the building are single-glazed in their upper half and appear original. The wooden door to the upper floor is not original. A projecting brick belt course that connects the pilasters at their capitals visually separates the first and second floors. The second floor exterior wall has two windows and one exterior door opening clustered right and left of center. The doors provide access from living space to a single, cantilevered balcony that extends across 80 percent of the facade. The flat window openings flanking the doors are double-hung and

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single-glazed. The wooden exterior doors are glazed in their upper half and appear original. The balcony has a wooden deck, four wooden posts with square bases and capitals, a simple wooden balustrade, closed eaves, and a shingled hip roof. The building is crowned with a stepped parapet that may have been added after construction and which is capped with limestone.

The small, square Commercial Vernacular building at the corner of Fletcher Street and the alley between W. Oak and W. Pearl Streets (photo 9) is an example of the style that became popular for single-occupant enterprises in the 1920s and 1930s. A square two-story brick building, constructed with utility in mind; it has a large corner window, two personnel entry doors and a large roll-up vehicle door in the first floor of the main (east side) facade. Three small brick pilasters create four bays in the facade. The large corner window, in the left bay, has a limestone sill and lintel, industrial-style metal window frame and muntins, and five-by-five glazing. The personnel entry doors in the two left bays have concrete thresholds and limestone lintels. The wooden personnel doors are glazed two by three with lower section paneling. A large wood-paneled roll-up door with a band of single lights across the center is in a right bay. The second floor has three flat window openings left, right, and center with stone sills. The windows are industrial style with metal frames and muntins and three by three glazing. The single-height parapet is stepped down on the sides. The cornice is crowned with halved, terra cotta drain tile.

The switching station (photo 11) is the only railroad-related building that remains in the district. The two-story brick building, built in the 1910s, is an example of utilitarian design with a few architectural details added to improve its visual image. The primary façade, the south side, features a second-story oriel supported by limestone brackets. Windows throughout the building have limestone sills, are double-hung, and with the exception of one window, glazed one-over-one. The eaves of the hipped roof are wide, in the Prairie style, and open.

The Union City Post Office at 102 W. Pearl Street, completed in 1935, is an example of a one-story Colonial Revival brick building constructed during the trying times of the Depression. The primary facade, the south side, is divided into three arched bays: two with windows and the center containing the main entryway, with wings on the east and west ends. The arched flank bays are detailed with limestone blocks at the impost and at the key. The tall rectangular windows, in these bays, have limestone sills and limestone details in the lintels.

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The window sashes are double hung and glazed 12-over-12. The windows in the wings are similar in size and glazing without the limestone-detailed lintels. The entryway is framed with a standard Colonial Revival surround consisting of fluted pilasters, an entablature, and a broken scroll pediment fabricated with limestone. The metal-framed door is flanked by narrow single-glazed sidelights. The door is single glazed. A wide plain wood frieze separates the brick exterior walls at the eaves line. The gable end roof is moderately pitched. The wings have a limestone belt course below the limestone-capped parapet of the flat roof.

On the east wall of the interior space is a WPA-funded mural, painted by Indiana artist Donald Mattison, in 1938. The mural, titled "Country Cousin," depicts farmers and their families and symbolizes the dire times, the required frugality, and strength of family values during the recent past (the Depression years) and the birth of better times to come.

SECTION 8 Statement of Significance

The Union City Commercial Historic District is significant under Criteria A. As the regional commercial center for storing, shipping, and redistribution of agricultural produce, consumer goods, and railroad equipment, the city provided a single location to control and to facilitate traffic arriving and departing on multiple railroad lines. Local commercial district businesses furnished food, lodging, and services for railroad employees and their families, as well as travelers. Farmers engaged in raising the corn, wheat, and hogs that moved through the city's terminals on the way to the large markets of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Chicago. In the early 1910s, the city's manufacturers of automobile and bus bodies participated in a transportation revolution that changed the face of the country. Union City's Commercial Historic District is one of only three downtown historic districts in Randolph County and, in this context, represents a diminishing historical record of an important period in the history of Indiana and the Midwest.

Union City is unique for a number of reasons. The Ohio-Indiana state line divides the city into two separate administrative divisions, Union City, Indiana, and Union City, Ohio. From its very beginnings, both Union Cities were railroad towns. By design, Union City, Indiana, became the predominant of the two cities; however, by the late nineteenth century, collectively they were known as the "Hub City," or according to one source the "Hub of Two States," because of their location at the intersection of four railroad lines. The Big Four railroad operated a round house

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and large switch yard one block southwest of the Indiana-side city center until the 1930s, and the main passenger depot was located on the Indiana side of the state line. This National Register nomination pertains to Union City, Indiana, only.

The district is significant under Criteria C for its collection of buildings that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of architecture such as Italianate, Neo-Classical Revival, Romanesque, and Commercial Vernacular styles prevalent during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. With few exceptions, the facades of the buildings within the district could be returned to an "as-was" state.

Randolph County, Indiana, possesses many natural features and benefits that have contributed to its economic success. Blessed with fertile soil, natural drainage, and moderate climate, the region's earliest settlers, circa 1820, took advantage of this bounty and quickly became exporters of grain and livestock. Geographically positioned near the "Quaker Trace" between Richmond and Fort Wayne, Indiana, and the "Deerfield Road" that connected Fort Wayne, Indiana, with Cincinnati, Ohio, the state line border area that includes Union City, Indiana, became an important focal point for commerce and rail transportation.

Transportation played an integral part in the establishment and history of Union, Indiana, but a number of other important events took place well before the introduction of iron tracks. Originally owned and partially cleared by Augustus Loveland, the 160-acre tract of land later known as the town of Union, passed into the hands of the Smith brothers, Jeremiah and Oliver, in May, 1849. The brothers, flush from success in establishing the Bellefontaine Railroad and intent on continuing their impact on railroad development, surveyed and platted the land into lots for immediate sale. The motivating factor for this purchase was probably their early knowledge that this point on the state line between of Indiana and Ohio was projected to be a rail intersection for three railroads under construction; the New York Central, the Pennsylvania, and the Dayton and Union rail lines.

Construction of the railroads established the pattern for settlement of Union, as it was known prior to 1852, when two events occurred that changed the fortunes of the towns. Early in 1852, a dispute over the original plat for the town, which embraced lots on both sides of the state line occasioned a replatting, and the name Union City was agreed upon as recognition of the unification of two states within its boundaries. In December, 1852, the Dayton and Union Railroad reached the town from the east; a few days later, the Bee Line, coming from

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Indianapolis, joined track with the another section of the Bee Line Railroad coming west from Bellefontaine, Ohio, at Union, Indiana. Actually, their tracks never "joined" because of different width or gauge track used by the two sections of the same railroad. For a time, goods being shipped across state lines required off-loading and reloading at Union to continue their journey. In January, 1853, the first passenger train traveled through Union City from Dayton, Ohio, to Indianapolis, Indiana. While all this building was going on, the Smith brothers assured the primacy of the Indiana side of the settlement by acquiring a 40-acre parcel of land on the state line between the two communities. This purchase guaranteed, forever, the economic superiority of Union City, Indiana.

The increased availability of railroad transportation in and around Union City encouraged the growth of commerce, whetted the appetite for more railroad access to markets, and laid the foundation for a solid financial future for the community. In 1856, track was completed on what would later be known as the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1869-71, a portion of the same rail line, known as the Union and Logansport Railroad, linked those two Indiana towns. Eventually, Union City became, according to some sources, "the most important railroad center in the state or even the country."

While its statewide importance might be argued, Union City and its railroad-hub status assured economic success for many associated entrepreneurial endeavors. In the 1850s and 60s, the skeletal framework of an enduring community took on muscle and flourished. In 1856, according to shoemaker Jesse Paxon, the downtown area's first retail store served local residents with goods carted from Greenville, Ohio, before tracks first arrived, but that modus operandi soon became history. Railroad cars brought in goods from large cities and hauled the area's agricultural surplus to markets in other states. Grain houses, used for interim storage, and grain forwarding agents engaged in the lucrative business of transporting bulk cargo via rail. Quicker and less influenced by the vagaries of mud roads, bad weather, and darkness, the railroads offered bulk shipments at reduced costs. Blacksmiths, livery stables, and harness makers retained their importance in supplying the growing transportation network.

An expanding economy demands more than just commercial enterprises to sustain it. The first Methodist Episcopal Church welcomed its members in 1852. About the same time, Mrs. Mary Ensminger taught the first public school classes in her father's house. In 1858, the first public school building replaced the house as the seat of learning in the community. In the next decade, a growing pool of

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capital engendered by booming business motivated Edward Starbuck to set up the First National Bank in Union City.

The growing number of merchants, hostelryes, livery stables, and service businesses met the basic needs, of the 150-plus railroad workers living in the community. For example, the Branham Hotel on W. Pearl Street, the first brick building in town, completed in 1856, catered to the transient public as well as some of the permanent employees of the railroads. No longer in existence, the hotel stood at the southeast corner of the proposed commercial historic district. Other establishments such as groceries, hardware stores, tin shops, doctor's offices, millinery shops, and an undertaker appeared in the center of commercial activity along N. Columbia Street. More shops and small businesses in town drew an increasing number of people seeking employment. This growing population sought more goods and services and expanded the community's wealth. By 1870, Union City's population numbered 1,400 residents: by 1880, the population was 2,500 and accounted for ten percent of Randolph County's overall population.

During the 1870s and 1880s, Union City continued to prosper as the outlying farms of the region increased their production and kept alive the economic growth of the earlier decades. On a national scale after the Civil War, railroad construction increased in intensity and in area coverage. The Industrial Revolution, stymied in the United States by the destructive influence of the Civil War, geared up for the tremendous growth spurt experienced in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Easy access to numerous railroads made Union City a prime location for businesses requiring low cost, efficient transportation to all points of the compass. Growing demands for more housing, commercial buildings, and storefronts supported enterprises such as Peter Kuntz's saw- and planing mill and lumber yards which were located on W. Pearl Street between N. Howard and N. Columbia Streets. Primarily involved in production of doors, sashes, and blinds and the shipment of finished lumber, Kuntz's business filled and shipped 2,800 railroad carloads to market in 1879. A local tile factory produced and shipped 100,000 tiles on some of the 16 passenger and 22 freight trains that passed through Union City on a daily basis.

Transportation of another sort influenced the economic growth of Union City in the last decades of the century. Established in the early 1880s, the Union City Carriage Manufacturing Company was a harbinger of Union City's major involvement in the future of the automotive industry. Employing 35 skilled

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craftsmen, the company produced 2,500 carts and 800 buggies and carriages annually. Shipped on local railroads to destinations all over the country, Union City Carriage products earned the respect of a consuming public for their high quality. For a time, the company delved into motorized transportation when they produced the "Union City 6," a car like many others of the time that did not enjoy long-term success.

Union City's next venture into the manufacture of vehicles for the Transportation Revolution occurred in 1898 with the founding of the Union City Body Company. Incorporated in 1903 by S. R. Bell and two other partners, the company built bodies for such noteworthy custom automobiles as the Haynes, the Duesenberg, the Auburn, and the Cord which were all built in Indiana during the formative years of the present automobile industry. Adapting to market changes, the company moved from the production of closed sedan bodies in the late 1910s, and to an additional line of theater chairs in the 1920s. In 1930, Union City Body Company began the manufacture of bodies for school and transit buses, an endeavor that led to an association with Checker Cab Manufacturing Company to build long distance transportation bus bodies. In the late 1940s, they began to manufacture utility truck bodies such as the ubiquitous Chevrolet Step Van.

In 1883, Union City experienced a major catastrophe that is a defining moment in its history. Known as "the Big Fire of 1883," this conflagration destroyed a multi-block area of Union City from west of N. Walnut Street, east to N. Columbia and south to the railroad tracks. Ignited by sparks from a passing train, large stacks of wooden lath drying in Peter Kuntz's lumberyard burst into flames, and the fire immediately spread to other lumber piles and dwellings in the vicinity. Strong southwest winds carried the flames eastward and eventually consumed all the buildings in their path. As was the case during this period when fires were commonplace, the rubble was soon cleared and new buildings literally rose from the ashes. The actual loss attributed to the fire was \$225,000. Peter Kuntz, ever the enterprising lumberyard owner, had three trainloads of lumber unloaded and two more waiting on a rail siding one week after the fire.

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the Union City community improved its infrastructure and widened its intellectual horizons. In 1895, a new permanent school building was erected to replace one built in 1858. Water mains and hydrants appeared in the city in the early 1880s. Supplied from a well south of town, the water works and distribution system were the pride of the community. In 1880, James Mooreman donated land for a city park on N. Columbia Street. In

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1902, interests of a local reading society stimulated the school superintendent to secure a \$10,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie to build a city library on the park site. Located just north of the historic district boundary, the library continues to serve the community.

Interurban transportation linked small communities with each other and with big cities. Movers of passengers and small freight, interurban trains spanned the state in the early 1900s and aided in the interchange of commerce. In 1902, the interurban came to Union City. Operated as the Union Traction Company, hourly scheduled trains left for destinations such as Dayton, Ohio, to the east and Indianapolis to the west and all points in between. The regularity and relatively low cost of interurban travel allowed workers to move farther afield to seek employment, encouraged growers and shippers of perishable produce to enter new markets, reduced transportation costs of inbound retail goods, and afforded consumers the opportunity to investigate new markets for their needs.

The early decades of the twentieth century brought changes to Union City's railroad-oriented business and other local manufacturers. As railroads continued to consolidate the industry into larger corporate structures, and automotive transportation began to blossom, train traffic stops in Union City decreased. However, until the late 1930s, the Big Four Railroad continued to operate its round house and maintenance facility. Union City Body Company continued to employ local workers through the years of the Great Depression. The Backstay Welt Company, established in 1899 by R. C. Schemmel, switched production from carriage and buggy tops and supported the automotive industry by providing the patented *Hidem* trim piece for car interiors.

In 1940, Sheller Globe Corporation set up business in Union City to fabricate screw machine and zinc die cast parts for the auto industry. During World War II, Sheller turned-out fuses for military munitions such as artillery shells, land mines, mortar shells, and grenades.

The skilled labor force that sustained Union City's economic and commercial fortunes for more than six decades began with railroad men, grew during the infancy and maturation of the automotive industry and continues to be a vital force in the community today. The buildings of the Commercial Historic District remind us of the ambition, foresight, and belief in the future that motivated men like Jeremiah Smith to invest their time and talents in what became an integral part of the history of railroading and the states of Ohio and Indiana.

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SECTION 9 Bibliography

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SECTION 10 Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the southwest corner of intersection W. Smith and N. Columbia Streets, proceed west along north side of W. Smith Street to N. Howard Street; turn north and proceed along east side of N. Howard to intersection with W. Pearl Street; turn east along south side of W. Pearl Street to intersection with N. Fletcher Street; turn north and proceed along west side of N. Fletcher Street until intersection with east-west alley between W. Pearl and W. Oak Streets; turn west and proceed along alley's north side to the rear of the Hindsley Building turn north and proceed along the rear property line, then turn west and follow the rear property line behind 325-339 W. Oak Street to the east side of N. Howard Street,

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proceed north past intersection with W. Oak Street, to the property line behind 336 W. Oak Street; turn east and proceed along the lot line of the buildings on the north side of W. Oak Street across N. Fletcher and N. Columbia Streets to the north-south alley between N. Columbia and N. Union Streets; turn south and proceed in the alley past W. Oak Street to the alley intersection between W. Oak and W. Pearl Streets; turn east and proceed to intersection with N. Union Street; turn south and proceed along the centerline of N. Union Street to the property line behind the post office at 102 W. Pearl Street; turn east and proceed to State Line; turn south and proceed along the west side of State Line across W. Pearl Street to the property line behind 101 W. Pearl Street; turn west and proceed along the property lines of 101-103, 105, and 211 W. Pearl Street to its intersection with the north-south alley between N. Columbia and N. Union Streets; turn south and proceed to W. Smith Street; turn west and proceed to the start point on Columbia Street.

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the district circumscribes the remaining contiguous buildings of the commercial district that sustained the community and its environs during the years of growing economic prosperity. To the north and west are concentrations of residential buildings; to the south, separated from the district by the Conrail tracks, remain a few commercial buildings and a large number of residences; and to the east, is the Ohio-Indiana state line.

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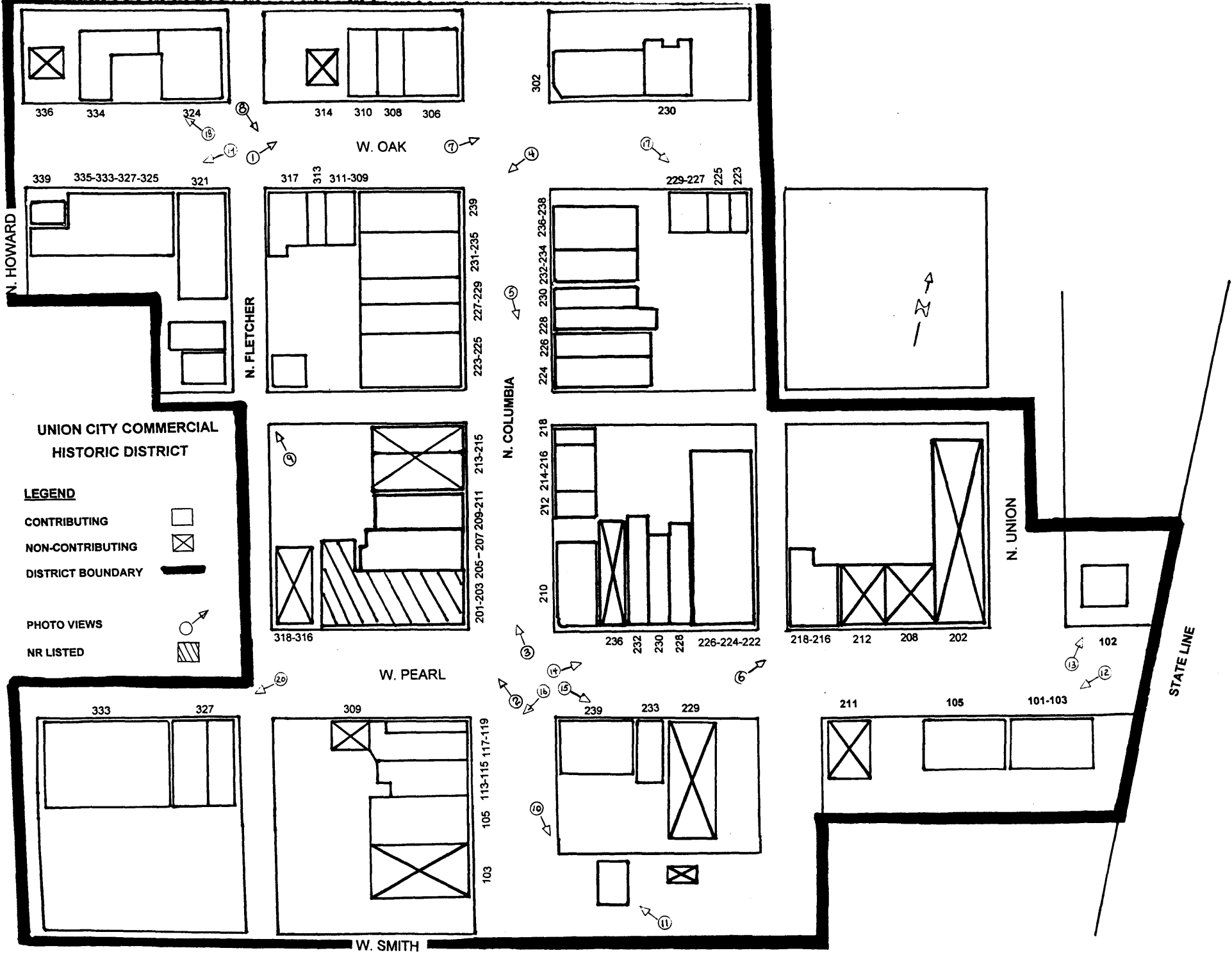
List of Historical Resources	<u>C</u>	<u>N/C</u>
<i>East-West Streets</i>		
1. 223 W. Oak	X	
2. 225 W. Oak	X	
3. 230 W. Oak	X	
4. 227-229 W. Oak	X	
5. 306 W. Oak	X	
6. 308 W. Oak	X	
7. 309-311 W. Oak	X	
8. 310 W. Oak	X	
9. 313 W. Oak	X	
10. 314 W. Oak		X
11. 317 W. Oak	X	
12. 321 W. Oak	X	
13. 324 W. Oak	X	
14. 325-327-333-335 W. Oak	X	
15. 334 W. Oak	X	
16. 336 W. Oak		X
17. 339 W. Oak	X	
18. 101-103 W. Pearl	X	
19. 102 W. Pearl	X	
20. 105 W. Pearl	X	
21. 202 W. Pearl		X
22. 208 W. Pearl		X
23. 211 W. Pearl		X
24. 212 W. Pearl		X
25. 216-218 W. Pearl	X	
26. 222-224-226 W. Pearl	X	
27. 228 W. Pearl	X	
28. 229 W. Pearl		X
29. 230 W. Pearl	X	
30. 233 W. Pearl	X	
31. 236 W. Pearl		X
32. 239 W. Pearl	X	
33. 309 W. Pearl		X
34. 316-318 W. Pearl		X
35. 327 W. Pearl	X	

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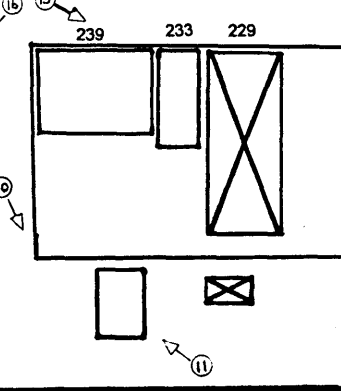
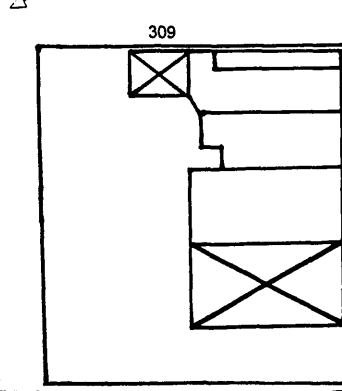
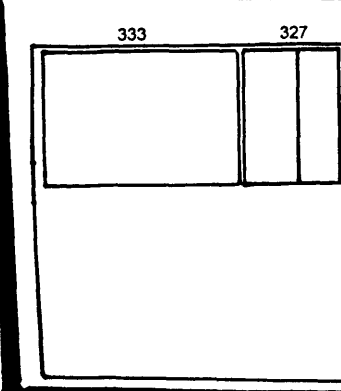
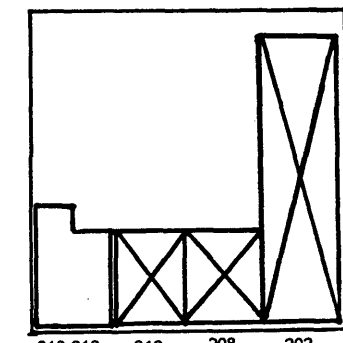
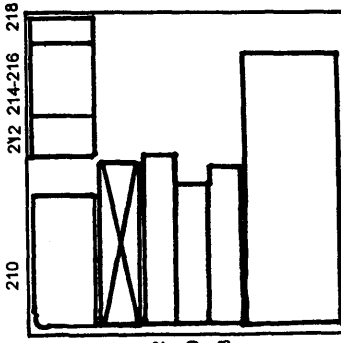
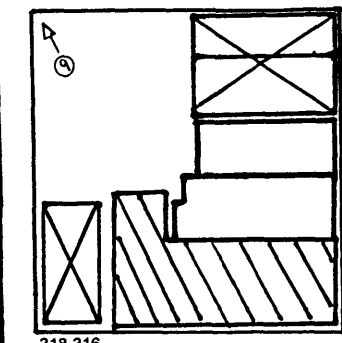
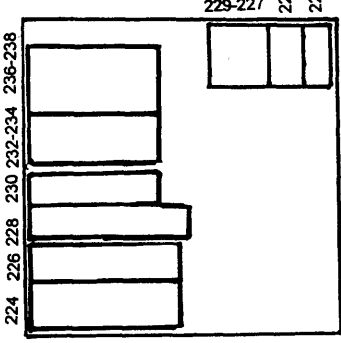
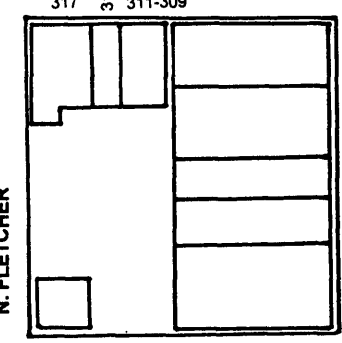
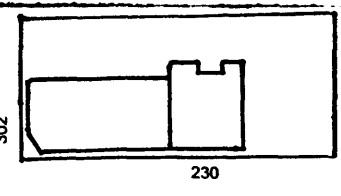
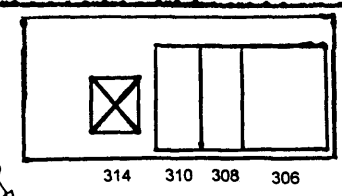
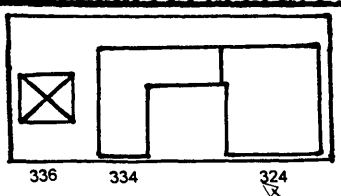
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 36. 333 W. Pearl | X | |
| <i>North-South Streets</i> | | |
| 1. 103 N. Columbia | | X |
| 2. 105 N. Columbia | X | |
| 3. 113-115 N. Columbia | X | |
| 4. 117-119 N. Columbia | X | |
| 5. 201-203 N. Columbia (not included in #) | X | |
| 6. 205 N. Columbia | X | |
| 7. 207 N. Columbia | X | |
| 8. 209-211 N. Columbia | X | |
| 9. 210 N. Columbia | X | |
| 10. 212 N. Columbia | X | |
| 11. 213-215 N. Columbia | | X |
| 12. 214-216 N. Columbia | X | |
| 13. 218 N. Columbia | X | |
| 14. 223-225 N. Columbia | X | |
| 15. 224 N. Columbia | X | |
| 16. 226 N. Columbia | X | |
| 17. 227-229 N. Columbia | X | |
| 18. 228 N. Columbia | X | |
| 19. 230 N. Columbia | X | |
| 20. 232-234 N. Columbia | X | |
| 21. 231-235 N. Columbia | X | |
| 22. 239 N. Columbia | X | |
| 23. 236-238 N. Columbia | X | |
| 24. 302 N. Columbia | X | |
| Unnumbered buildings at intersection of alley between W. Pearl and W. Oak and Fletcher Street. | | |
| 1. Northeast corner (Union City Motors) | X | |
| 2. Northwest corner (Hindsley) | X | |
| 3. North of Hindsley building (Huddles) | X | |
| Unnumbered buildings between Conrail tracks and the parking lot behind 239 W. Pearl. | | |
| 1. Railroad switching station | X | |
| 2. Wooden storage building | | X |



**UNION CITY COMMERCIAL
HISTORIC DISTRICT**

LEGEND

- CONTRIBUTING
- NON-CONTRIBUTING
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- PHOTO VIEWS
- NR LISTED



W. SMITH

STATE LINE