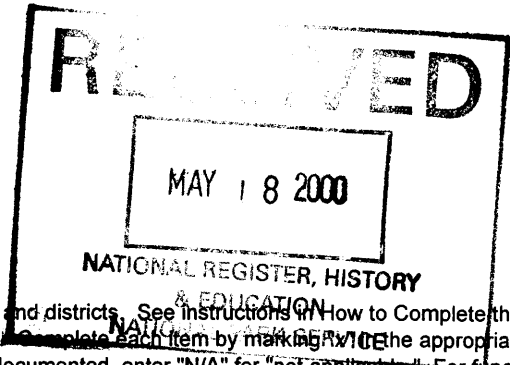


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions on How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking  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 Monon Commercial Historic District

other names/site number 181-421-11000

**2. Location**

street & number Roughly: Market St. btwn 3rd St. + 5th St., and 4th St. btwn Arch St. + Railroad St.  N/A  not for publication

city or town Monon  N/A  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county White code 181 zip code 47959

**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]  
Signature of certifying official/Title

5/4/00  
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

[Signature: Wilson A. Beall]

6/15/00

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	
24	8	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
24	8	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: Financial Institution

GOVERNMENT: City Hall

EDUCATION: Library

RECREATION/CULTURE: Theater

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

GOVERNMENT: City Hall

EDUCATION: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

CONCRETE

roof OTHER: Composite

other

Narrative Description

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

ty

**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)

COMMERCE \_\_\_\_\_

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

c.1860-c.1940 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Brookie, True L. \_\_\_\_\_

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Monon Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

White IN  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** appx. 5 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 16 | 510490 | 4523040  
Zone Easting Northing

3 | 16 | 510080 | 4523280  
Zone Easting Northing

2 | 16 | 510490 | 4523280

4 | 16 | 510080 | 4523080

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 Laura Thayer, Historic Preservation Planner, Storrow Kinsella Partnership Inc.  
organization Monon Civic Preservation Society date 11/1/99  
street & number 212 W. 10th St., Studio A440 telephone 317-639-3460  
city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

**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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**Roughly defined as Market Street between 3rd Street and 5th Street, and 4th Street between Arch Street and Railroad Street.**

National Register of Historic Places  
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Section No. 7 Page 2 Monon Commercial Historic District

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White County is part of the vast prairie that stretches across the north-central part of the state. The town of Monon is located in the northern part of the county, in Monon Township. Monon is at the junction of two CSX rail lines, formerly lines of the Monon Railroad. The rail lines cross about a block south and a block east of downtown Monon. U.S. 421 extends north and south through town on Market Street, the main street of Monon. State Road 16 runs east and west along 4th Street, the principal cross street. The downtown commercial district extends roughly a block in each direction of the intersection of Market and 4th streets.

Included in the historic district are 24 contributing buildings and 8 noncontributing buildings. Most of the contributing buildings are commercial buildings. There is also a library, a town hall, and a residence. The noncontributing buildings are commercial buildings that have been extensively altered, or were built after the period of significance (c.1860-c.1940).

The historic district falls within the original plat of New Bradford. Immediately adjacent to the railroad line that was the reason for founding the town, the historic district has been the location of the commercial center since the town began. Originally, the buildings here were small, wood-frame structures. Dwellings and commercial buildings were located side-by-side. As the town grew and prospered, houses were moved to other parts of town or converted to stores. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, most of the wood-frame buildings were replaced by brick or concrete buildings. Several fires made this change in materials desirable.

The 1929 Sanborn Map shows a similar downtown to the one of today. The oldest commercial buildings are concentrated at the intersection of Market and 4th Streets. On the west side of Market Street at 3rd Street is the Hartman-Breese Ford Agency with its lot to the north. The Town Hall, on the west side of Market, and the Public Library, on the east side, define the northern end of the district. The Graves Building, on 4th Street, stands at the western end of the district.

Some of the differences between the 1929 Map and conditions today include the demolition of several dwellings on the east side of Market Street south of the district boundary. These have been replaced with small commercial buildings that appear to date from the 1950s and 60s. There was a group of one-story concrete block commercial buildings that were located on the west side of Market Street between the State Bank of Monon (photo 4) and Mack and Company. This area is now vacant. Several of the small commercial buildings between the Graves Building on the northeast corner of Market and Arch Street and Horner's Bank (photo 6) have been altered from their historic appearance.

Buildings added within the boundaries of the historic district since the 1929 map was drawn include the Howard Theater (1938; left in photo 12), the U.S. Post Office

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Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 3 Monon Commercial Historic District

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(1957; second from left in photo 12), and the McElroy Insurance Agency (1959; right in photo 8).

Buildings in the historic district represent the town from its early years, when it was known as New Bradford, until just prior to World War II. The oldest structure may be the gable-front building, constructed c.1860, on the southwest corner of Market and 4th Streets (right in photo 5, left in photo 19). This is a two-story, wood-frame building. The first floor has a remodeled, c.1950 storefront of brick and glass. The upper story has been sided in aluminum siding. The original wood, double hung windows with two lights in each sash are intact, as is the interior chimney at the end of the rear (west) façade.

Across the street on the northwest corner of Market and 4th Streets is another early building, C.M. Horner's Bank, built c.1870. This building originally comprised the section on the corner that was remodeled in the Neoclassical style in 1921 (photo 6), and the Italianate style section to the north (photo 7). An historic image on page 19 of the interim report shows the original appearance of the building. The bank was accessed from the corner entry, Horner's grocery store from the 4th Street entry, and the Arlington Hotel, from the Market Street entry. The Hotel was located on the second floor of the building.

The corner section of the building was originally two stories in height but was later remodeled on the interior to be a single story with a mezzanine on the interior. The 1921 remodeling also included adding tall, multi-light, round arched windows, pilasters on the ends of the building, a wide entablature at the top, and a pedimented entry on the corner. The building has recently been rehabilitated for use as a community center.

The section to the north, now defined as a separate building, retains much of its nineteenth century, Italianate style character. This two-story brick structure housed the Arlington Hotel, an early hostelry. The decorative metal storefront and cornice are intact. The storefront has been filled with new materials between the metal pilasters. Window openings on the second floor are original and retain their stone sills and lintels, but the sash has been altered.

To the north of the Arlington Hotel building are two Italianate style, brick commercial blocks that were constructed between 1895 and 1899. The building at 412 N. Market Street is a two-story brick building (second from right in photo 7). The façade is six bays wide. The storefront has been altered, but some elements, such as decorative metal pilasters, are intact. Transoms that were originally above display windows may be intact beneath the large sign that extends across the façade. Window openings are essentially intact and have original stone sills and lintels, but have been filled in with wood and small metal sash installed in the downsized opening. Decorative brickwork extends across the top of the building.

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The building at 416 N. Market Street housed Homer's Opera House on the second floor and stores on the first floor. This is a two-and-a-half story brick building. There are two storefronts plus a door that leads to the second story. The storefronts consist of decorative metal pilasters and large display windows. The transoms above the display windows have been covered. Window openings and double-hung wood sash are intact. There are small square windows at the attic level, and decorative brickwork extending across the top of the façade.

Abutting the Opera House to the north is a one-story, stone-faced building that was built in 1959 and serves as an insurance office. To the north of that, set back from the street and unattached to other buildings, is the Monon Town Hall (photo 9), built c.1920. A one-story concrete building with an attached garage, the town hall contains the water works, street department, police department, and other functions of town government. The building has brick facing on its main façade. Windows are double hung with wood sash. There is a central section with a stepped parapet, and two wings that have molded cornices extending over the openings. The north wing is a two-bay garage. The door of the north bay has filled in, and a pedestrian door added in the opening.

On the east side of Market Street, the Public Library (photo 14) anchors the north end of the historic district. The building is a typical Neoclassical Carnegie library. It is a one story brick building with a raised basement and a hipped roof. The pedimented entry in the center of the three bay principal façade is accessed by a set of concrete steps flanked by stepped brick walls. Windows on the building are wood with double hung sash, and are grouped. Decorative features include modillions under the eaves, and brickwork fashioned to resemble quoins. A one-story, brick addition, compatible with the historic design of the library, was added to the rear of the building in recent years.

To the south of the library is the only residence in the historic district (photo 13). This is a two-story frame building that dates from the late nineteenth century. The house was remodeled by Dr. Wayne W. Houser c.1937. The house has a side gable roof. The façade is three bays wide, with the entry in the center. There is a bay window on each side of the door. Windows are double hung with multi-light sash. There is a one-story wing on the south side, and a garage on the north side. Around the turn of the century, this was the Harlow House, a small inn or boarding house.

Between the Houser House and the corner of 4th Street are the Howard Theater, the U.S. Post Office, the Joseph Pogue Building, and the W.J. Hinkle Building (photo 12). The theater is a two-story brick building constructed in 1938 after the Strand, a movie theater owned by Arthur Howard, burned in 1937. The Howard family lived on the second floor of the building. The building is three bays wide, with small shop spaces in the end bays. The theater entrance is recessed under a marquee at the center bay. There is a ticket window in the center of the recessed area, with a set of double wood doors on each side.



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Adjacent to the theater to the south is the U.S. Post Office, built in 1957. This is a one-story building faced in limestone. Earlier post offices were located in various locations in downtown Monon since about 1855, including in the building at 326 N. Market Street (left in photo 5) in the 1920s.

To the south of the post office is the Pogue Building, constructed c.1895. This is a two-story brick building with a three-bay façade. The original storefront is partially intact, including decorative metal piers and cornice. Second story windows have been covered.

The Hinkle Building is a one-story, Craftsman style building faced in tapestry brick. There is concrete coping atop the parapet wall. Ornamentation includes stone accents and decorative brickwork. There were originally three storefronts in the building. The center and south storefront have been bricked in. The north storefront has been recessed.

On the northeast corner of Market and 4th streets, facing 4th Street, is the Fred Thomas Building (photo 17), built in 1912 after an earlier building on the site was destroyed by fire. The Thomas Building is a two-and-a-half story Neoclassical style brick building. The main façade is three bays wide. The storefront has been altered. The windows of the upper levels are in recessed panels separated by brick pilasters. Second floor windows are double hung with two lights in each sash. Above the windows are stone, architrave heads. At the attic level are small, rectangular windows with multi-light wood sash. Openings for these windows have stone sills and lintels. There is a molded stone cornice and a parapet wall at the top of the building.

The four buildings on the east side of Market Street south of 4th Street within the historic district are the Tull Block, the James Tull/J. Lackerman Building, the Newbold Oldsmobile Building, and a one-story concrete block building (photo 10). The Tull Block, built in 1921, is a two-story Craftsman style building. The principal façade is two bays wide. The building is faced in dark, tapestry brick. The storefront has been altered. Second story windows have double hung wood sash in flat-arched openings. The openings have soldier course lintels and stone sills. The sash is missing from the north window on the main façade. At the top of the building is a corbeled brick cornice.

The James Tull/J. Lackerman Building, built c.1895, is a two-and-a-half-story brick building with a five-bay façade. The storefront has been altered. Flat-arched window openings have been covered over. A rough-faced limestone band extends across the façade above window openings. There is a brick corbeling along the top of the building.

South of this building is the Newbold Oldsmobile Building, built c.1910. This is a two-story concrete block building faced in rusticated concrete block. The first floor retains

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its historic appearance, with large, multi-light display windows, double wood and glass garage doors. There are four window openings on the second story. The two end windows have double hung wood windows in flat arched openings. The sash has been removed from the two center windows.

The small building to the south of the Newbold Building appears to date from about 1940, and was probably built soon after the Strand Theater, formerly at this location, was destroyed by fire. The c.1940 building is a one-story concrete block structure. The main façade is pigmented structural glass.

The buildings to the south on the east side of Market Street were excluded from the historic district. Historically, there were several dwellings in this area. These have been replaced by several small, detached commercial buildings in the last few years (right in photo 2).

The west side of the street was included south to 3rd Street was included in the historic district. On the northwest corner of Market and 3rd Streets is the Hartman-Bresee Ford Agency (now Gutwein Motors). One of the most distinctive buildings in the district, the Hartman-Bresee Building has glazed terra cotta that extends across the main façade and wraps around the front corners. The remainder of the building is faced in glazed tile. The roof is a steel truss structure. Historically, the area north of the building was an open lot as it is today.

The next building to the north is the Mack and Company Ice Cream and Bottling Works, a concrete block building. Other important buildings on this side of Market Street include the State Bank of Monon (photo 4) and the Odd Fellows Building (center of photo 5). The State Bank of Monon is a one-story, Neoclassical style building constructed in 1912. The main façade is three bays wide. The building is faced in dark tapestry brick on the east facade. Limestone decorative elements on the main façade include a water table and a molded cornice supported by brackets. Openings have been blocked down.

The Odd Fellows Building is a two-story brick building that was constructed in 1911. The storefront of the building is intact and is composed of decorative metal elements, and transomed display windows. The second story has paired, double hung wood windows in flat-arched openings. Lintels and sills are limestone.

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Continuation Sheet

Section No.  8  Page  7  Monon Commercial Historic District

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The Monon Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion A, in the area of Commerce, and under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture. The historic district has been the center of commerce in this White County town since it was established in the late 1850s. The district exhibits a variety of architectural styles and types that date from c.1860 to c.1940. It was identified as a potential historic district by the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory in 1993.

**Commerce**

Monon Township was organized in 1836 and named for the Big and Little Monon Creeks. The name "Monon" is from the Potawatomi for "swift running." The township's first settlement, known as West Bedford, was near the confluence of the two creeks. The post office at West Bedford was established in 1838 and named Monon. The township's post office was moved to New Bradford soon after the new town was established in the 1850s.

New Bradford was platted in 1853 by James Brooks, president of the Louisville, New Albany, and Chicago Railroad. Brooks created the town as part of a plan to establish a network of stations along the railroad line between Lafayette and Michigan City. The railroad was constructed to provide a link between the Ohio River and the Great Lakes.

It was originally planned that the railroad's repair shops would be located in New Bradford. The town government could not reach an agreement with the railroad company, however, and the shops went to Lafayette. A number of repair shops were located in Indiana. The state's cities and towns competed for these important industries, which were major employers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

At the time New Bradford was established, agriculture was just beginning to move beyond the subsistence farming of the pioneer era. The prairies of northern Indiana were well on their way to being cleared of the deeply rooted grasses that characterized the region. The railroad made it possible for farmers to ship their products more efficiently as crop yields increased.

New Bradford was a small but important market center for the surrounding agricultural community. In the early years of the town, buildings were small, wood-frame structures. One of the few commercial buildings that survives from this period is a two-story, wood-frame, gable-front building on the southwest corner of Market and 4th Streets (right in photo 5).

The late 1870s and 1880s represented an era of railroad expansion in Indiana. Brooks had routed his railroad to Michigan City where it could link with the Michigan Central to Chicago. Railroad companies now wanted direct lines to Chicago as the city emerged in the late nineteenth century as a critical Great Lakes connection. The

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Section No. 8 Page 8 Monon Commercial Historic District

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Indianapolis, Delphi, and Chicago railroad, built in 1878, crossed the Louisville, New Albany, and Chicago Railroad at Monon. The same year, New Bradford was incorporated as a town and its name was changed to Monon.

The official name of the railroad became the Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville when the two lines that crossed in Monon were reorganized into one company in 1897. The railroad came to be known as the "Monon Line," however, because of the major crossing in the White County town. In 1957 the Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville officially became the Monon Railroad. The company merged with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in 1971, which later became part of CSX.

At the juncture of the two railroads, Monon prospered as a regional agricultural market. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, White County was one of the state's leading producers of corn, wheat, oats, and soybeans. Towns like Monon served a critical role in the collection of agricultural products for processing and shipping to other markets. They also were important retail centers for area farm families.

By 1880 Monon, with a population of 288, had a depot, a post office, two schools, two churches, an elevator, a lumberyard, and two hotels. An Odd Fellows Lodge had been established in 1876. One of the hotels was the Arlington, which was located on the second floor of the C.M. Horner building on the northeast corner of Market and 4th streets. On the first floor of this building were Horner's grocery and bank.

In the 1880s, several important industries were established in the area, including a quarry, and a brick and tile factory. Other businesses started in the decade included E.G. Bert's hardware store and the first newspaper, the Dispatch. (This publication was renamed by successive owners and today is published as the Monon News Review.)

By 1890, the population had grown to 1,064, an increase of nearly 350 percent over the previous Census count. During this decade, Joseph Pogue built a two-story brick building at 413 N. Market Street to house his general store (second from right in photo 12). Bradford Lodge #592 of the Free and Associated Masons was chartered in 1893. The Mason's first home was destroyed by fire in 1895. By 1899, the lodge had moved into the second floor of the new James Tull Building at 329-331 N. Market Street (second from left in photo 10). (In 1923, a new Masonic Temple was constructed outside the historic district. This later building is extant on the southwest corner of Market and 5th Streets.)

By the first decade of the twentieth century, Monon had prospered to the extent that the town could support a second bank. The State Bank of Monon was organized in 1906. In 1912, it moved into a new building at 322 N. Market Street (photo 4).

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 9 Monon Commercial Historic District

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The decade between 1910 and 1920 saw a 25 percent increase in population in Monon. During this period, the town's commercial district grew. The building that housed Mack and Company Ice Cream and Bottling Works (314 N. Market Street) was constructed around 1910. The Fred Thomas Building (100-102 E. 4th Street, photo 17) was built in 1912 after a previous building on the site was destroyed by fire. Other additions to the downtown included the new Odd Fellows Building, built in 1911 (330 N. Market Street, center of photo 5); the W.J. Hinkle Building, built in 1915 (407 N. Market Street, right in photo 12); and the Monon Public Library, built in 1914 (427 N. Market Street, photo 14). Before the library was constructed with the help of a Carnegie grant, a room in the Odd Fellows Building had been used as a public library.

In 1919, the Hartman and Bresee Model-T Ford Agency building (photo 3) was constructed at 300 N. Market Street. By 1929, the building had been acquired by the Lafayette Life Insurance Company and was used for dances and boxing until 1934 when it became the Gutwein Ford Agency. The business is still owned and operated by the Gutwein family as a Ford dealership.

Around 1920, the Town Hall (photo 9) was erected at 422 N. Market Street to accommodate the functions of local government, such as the fire department and the water department, which had expanded as the population grew.

In the 1920s both of Monon's banks failed. Horner's Bank closed in 1923, and the State Bank of Monon closed in 1929. These failures reflected the town's dependence on an agricultural economy. In the post-World War I era in Indiana in general, prices for farm goods decreased due to increased production coupled with declining markets. Areas like White County that were dependent on agriculture and had relatively little industry to fall back on were particularly hard hit. An indication of the impact of the agricultural recession on Monon is seen in its static population during the 1920s. Between 1920 and 1930, the town's population increased by only about 1 percent (from 1,357 to 1,374). During the 1930s, the decade of the Great Depression, Monon's population actually declined, from 1,374 to 1,262.

The Monon Railroad, the history of which had been linked to the history of the town, also began to decline during the 1920s. Though freight traffic remained about the same, passenger traffic decreased significantly. During the 1930s, with increased competition from larger railroads and alternate modes of transportation, the Monon filed for bankruptcy. The company was subsequently reorganized but never fully recovered its earlier importance.

Despite difficult economic times in the 1920s and 30s, Monon's commercial district survived and a few new businesses were added. A garment factory was established in the J.T. Graves Building (1896; two story brick building left of center in photo 16) on W. 4th Street, and a movie theater, the Strand, opened on the east side of N. Market Street. After the Strand was destroyed by fire in 1937, a new theater (left in photo 12) was built at 421 N. Market Street by Arthur Howard.

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Continuation Sheet

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Monon benefited from the new state highway system that developed in the 1920s and 30s. The automobile was rapidly accepted by Hoosiers as a means of transportation. In 1920, 333,067 vehicles were registered in the state. This number grew to 725,410 in 1925. State government responded to citizen demands for better roads by creating a state highway commission in 1919. A network of existing roads was identified by the commission in 1920. The state took over maintenance and improvement of these roads from local government. State Road 16, an east-west route would pass through Monon along 4th Street. As part the U.S. Highway system, development of which began in 1925, U.S. 421 was routed along an early nineteenth century road that extended on Market Street through Monon between Indianapolis and Michigan City.

Automobiles translated into businesses for Monon. The 1929 Sanborn Map shows 10 automobile-related establishments in the downtown area, a large number for a town the size of Monon. These include garages, a tire shop, auto repair shops, a battery shop, and a filling station. The fact that Monon had so many of these types of businesses might be explained by its position along a well-traveled highway (U.S. 421) and its proximity to the White County resorts of Lake Freeman and Lake Shafer, both developed in the 1920s. Two of these historic automobile businesses remain active in the historic district today in the buildings at 300 (photo 3) and 327 N. Market Street (third from left in photo 10).

Hard times in agriculture were reversed in White County in the 1940s. During the years of World War II, farmers struggled with labor and equipment shortages, but were still able to exceed the high production levels of the 1930s. Increased prices for farm products made it possible for many farmers to pay off debts accumulated during the 1920s recession and 1930s Depression. Evidence of returned prosperity was seen in Monon in the increase in population between 1940 and 1950 (from 1,262 to 1,439), and in the establishment of the Monon Bank in 1944, in the old State Bank of Monon building. In the post-World War II era, new construction in the commercial district included the U.S. Post Office (second from left in photo 12) at 415 N. Market Street, built in 1957; and Dick McElroy's insurance office (right in photo 8) at 420 N. Market Street, built in 1959.

### ***Architecture***

The architecture of the historic district is typical for a small Indiana market town of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Buildings are generally one and two story brick, except for a few wood-frame structures. With a few exceptions, they are simple buildings, but usually exhibit massing or ornamentation that relates them to a particular architectural type or style. Among styles referenced are Italianate, Neoclassical, and Craftsman. Despite some degree of alteration on nearly all the buildings, the district as a whole retains its integrity. Alterations include the addition of synthetic siding, remodeling of storefronts, changes in window openings, and replacement of window sash.

National Register of Historic Places  
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Section No. 8 Page 11 Monon Commercial Historic District

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Possibly the oldest building in the district is a gable-front building on the southwest corner of Market and 4th Streets (right in photo 5, left in photo 19). The building has been altered, but still has its original form and windows.

Several buildings in the block to the north reflect the Italianate style of architecture that was pervasive on Indiana main streets from about 1870 to 1900. The building at 408 N. Market Street (left in photo 7) was built c.1870 as part of Horner's Bank to the south (see historic photo on page 19 of interim report). Most of the pressed metal storefront is intact on 408 N. Market, as are the metal cornice and decorative brick banding.

The two buildings to the north, at 412 (center of photo 7) and 416 N. Market Street (right in photo 7 and center of photo 8), are late examples of the Italianate style, having been constructed about 1895. On both, the historic metal storefront is largely intact, as is decorative brickwork at the top of the building. Other examples of the style are the Joseph Pogue Building at 413 N. Market Street (second from right in photo 12), and the J.T. Graves Building on the northeast corner of 4th and Arch Streets, built in 1896.

Elements of the Craftsman style are present in several downtown buildings. Commercial examples of the style were generally simple and featured multi-colored or textured brick, corbeled brick cornices, and stone accents. Among buildings in Monon that fit this category are a building at 326 N. Market Street, built c.1915 (left in photo 5), the Tull Block at 333 N. Market Street, built in 1921 (left in photo 10), and the Hinkle Building at 407 N. Market Street, built in 1915 (right in photo 12).

The influence of the Neoclassical style is seen in several of the district's early twentieth century buildings. This was a style almost always employed by banks in the early twentieth century, and often seen in public buildings and schools. The most elaborate Neoclassical buildings in Monon are the Public Library, built in 1914 (photo 14), and Horner's Bank, remodeled in the style in 1921 (photo 6). The library is a typical Carnegie, with a symmetrical façade, raised basement, and a flight of steps leading up to a central entry. Classical ornamentation includes modillions under the eaves and a pediment over the entry. The library was designed by architect, True L. Brookie.

The Horner Bank is ornate for a small town financial institution, with its two-story, round arch window openings, wide entablature, pedimented entry, and festoon decorations. Other Neoclassical style buildings include the State Bank of Monon, built in 1912 (photo 4), the Fred Thomas Building, built in 1912 (photo 17), and the Hartman and Bresee Model-T Ford Agency, built in 1919 (photo 3).

***Commercial Resources in White County***

Another town in White County that is similar to Monon in many ways is Brookston, which is located in Prairie Township on the south side of the county. Brookston, like Monon, was laid out in 1853 along the Louisville, New Albany and Chicago Railroad. The town was named for James Brooks, president of the railroad. Brookston is similar in size and population to Monon. A potential commercial historic district consisting of 26 resources was identified in Brookston by the Indiana Historic Sites and Inventory in 1993. The period of significance for the district is c.1895-c.1940.

One other commercial historic district was identified by the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory in White County: the historic downtown of Wolcott in Princeton Township. Wolcott was platted in 1861 along the Columbus, Chicago, and Indiana Central Railroad. The town is similar in character to Monon, though smaller (the 1990 population was 886 compared to 1,650 for Monon). The Wolcott district includes 16 resources that date from c.1900-c.1950.

Other than the three small railroad town commercial districts, there are few historic commercial resources in White County. Part of the reason for this is a 1974 tornado that devastated Monticello, the county seat. Among the few commercial resources that do remain in Monticello are buildings on Marion Street (29034) and Main Street (29036); the White County Loan, Trust and Savings Company (29060); and the Odd Fellows Lodge (29056).

***Current Preservation Efforts in Monon***

The loss of Monon Trailer, a major employer in the 1970s led to an economic downturn in Monon. This, along with competition from large department stores and regional shopping centers, resulted in the closing of stores in the commercial district. Today, Monon Trailer has been reorganized as HPA Monon. Along with an economic recovery is a movement to revitalize the downtown. Several projects have been completed or are in progress. For example, the building that housed Horner's Bank was given to the town in 1975 and is currently being adapted for use as a community center. The State Bank of Monon building now houses an adult learning center. The Howard Theater, which closed in the 1970s, was rehabilitated in the late 1980s.

The Monon Civic Preservation Society is sponsoring the nomination of downtown Monon to the National Register as part of ongoing revitalization efforts.



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Continuation Sheet

Section No. 10 Page 14 Monon Commercial Historic District

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northwest corner of 3rd and Market streets; thence north along the west side of Market street to a point on the axis of the north boundary of Lot 23 of the Original Town of Monon; thence east across Market Street along said axis and continuing along said boundary to the west side of the north-south alley east of Market Street; thence north along the west boundary of said alley, across 4th Street, continuing along the west boundary of said alley to the north boundary of Lot 5 of the Original Town of Monon; thence west along said boundary to the east side of Market Street; thence south along the east side of Market Street to a point on the axis of the north boundary of Lot 8 of the Original Town of Monon; thence west across Market Street along said axis and continuing along said boundary to the east side of the north-south alley west of Market Street; thence south along the east side of said alley to a point on the axis of the north boundary of Lot 17 of the Original Town of Monon; thence west across said alley continuing along the north boundary of said lot to the east side of Arch Street; thence south along the east side of Arch Street to the northeast corner of Arch and 4th streets; thence east along the north side of 4th Street, across the north-south alley west of Market Street, to the east side of said alley; thence south, across 4th Street, along the east side of said alley to the north side of 3rd Street; thence east along the north side of 3rd Street to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary defines the historic downtown of Monon, comprised mainly of commercial buildings, but also including the town hall, the public library, and one residence. The boundary was drawn to exclude extensively altered buildings, intrusions, and residential buildings on the edges of the district.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Photographs Page 15 Monon Commercial Historic District

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The following information is the same for all photographs:

1. Monon Commercial Historic District
2. Monon, White County, IN
3. Laura Thayer
4. August 1999
5. Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology  
402 W. Washington Street, Room W274  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Additional information for individual photographs:

Photo 1

1. West side of Market Street south of Monon Railroad Tracks
6. Camera facing southwest
7. 2 of 20

Photo 2

1. Market Street north of Monon Railroad Tracks
6. Camera facing northeast
7. 2 of 20

Photo 3

1. Hartman and Bresee, 300 N. Market Street
6. Camera facing northwest
7. 3 of 20

Photo 4

1. State Bank of Monon
6. Camera facing west
7. 4 of 20

Photo 5

1. West side of Market Street south of Fourth Street
6. Camera facing southwest
7. 5 of 20

Photo 6

1. C.M. Horner Bank, 402 N. Market Street
6. Camera facing northwest
7. 6 of 20

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Continuation Sheet

Photographs Page 16 Monon Commercial Historic District

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Photo 7

1. West side of Market Street north of Fourth Street
6. Camera facing northwest
7. 7 of 20

Photo 8

1. C.M. Horner Block, 416 N. Market Street
6. Camera facing northwest
7. 8 of 20

Photo 9

1. Monon Town Hall, 422 N. Market Street
6. Camera facing southwest
7. 9 of 20

Photo 10

1. East side of Market Street south of Fourth Street
6. Camera facing southeast
7. 10 of 20

Photo 11

1. Market Street south of Fifth Street
6. Camera facing southeast
7. 11 of 20

Photo 12

1. East side of Market Street north of Fourth Street
6. Camera facing northeast
7. 12 of 20

Photo 13

1. Dr. W.W. Houser House, 425 N. Market Street
6. Camera facing east
7. 13 of 20

Photo 14

1. Monon Public Library, 427 N. Market Street
6. Camera facing east
7. 14 of 20

Photo 15

1. Market Street south of Fifth Street
6. Camera facing south
7. 15 of 20

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Continuation Sheet

Photographs          Page 17 Monon Commercial Historic District

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Photo 16

1. North side of Fourth Street west of Market Street
6. Camera facing northwest
7. 16 of 20

Photo 17

1. Fred Thomas Building, 100-102 E. Fourth Street
6. Camera facing northeast
7. 17 of 20

Photo 18

1. North side of Fourth Street east of Market Street
6. Camera facing northeast
7. 18 of 20

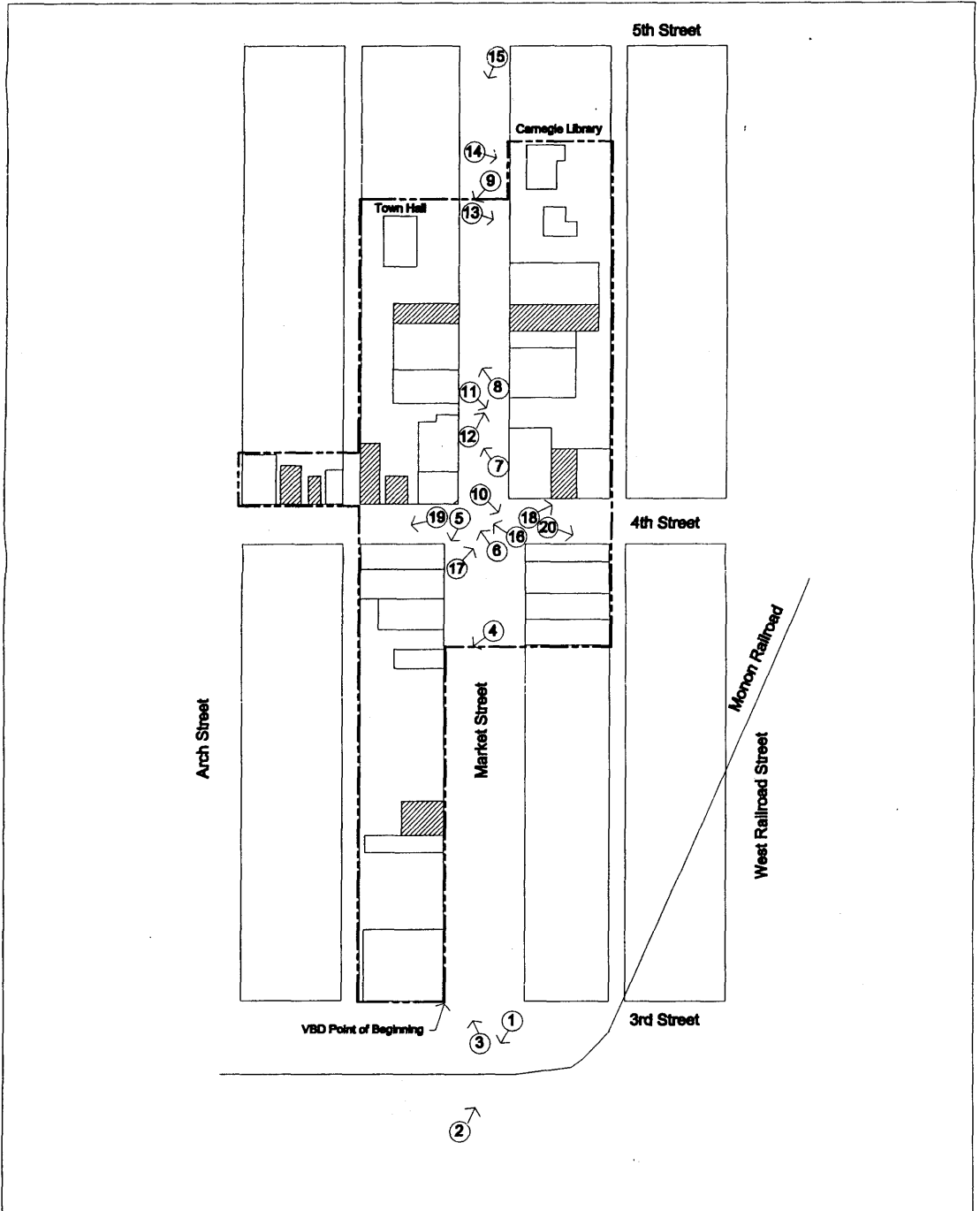
Photo 19

1. South side of Fourth Street west of Market Street
6. Camera facing southwest
7. 19 of 20

Photo 20

1. South side of Fourth Street east of Market Street
6. Camera facing southeast
7. 20 of 20

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<b>Monon Commercial Historic District</b>	Non-contributing	North	Scale
Monon Civic Preservation Society Monon, IN	Photo view		Date: 10-25-99
Consultant Storrow Kinsella Partnership Inc	Boundary		