

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



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

**1. Name**

historic

and/or common Checotah Business District

**2. Location** Gentry Ave. between W. 1st and W. Main Sts, and Broadway Ave.

Blocks intersecting at and facing Gentry and Broadway,  
street & number Area within Blocks 67, 68, 69 and 70.  not for publication

city, town Checotah  vicinity of congressional district 002

state Oklahoma code 40 county McIntosh code 091

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple ownership (See Continuation Sheet)

street & number

city, town  vicinity of  state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the County Clerk

street & number McIntosh County Courthouse

city, town Eufaula state Oklahoma

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Oklahoma Historical Society, Preservation Office

city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

Between 1st and Main Streets and Spaulding Ave.

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## 7. Description

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

---

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

The Checotah Business District consists of a group of 48 buildings extending one block in each direction from the traffic light at the major intersection in Checotah, the corner of Broadway and Gentry. These structures combine locally made red brick and native sandstone in buildings completed between 1898 and 1930. This district still forms the heart of the prosperous commercial district of Checotah (and as such most of the buildings remain in good condition), partially due to the business brought into the area by recreational activities on Lake Eufaula and traffic from two major interstate highways. Most of the structures still display their original design, with only a few attempts to rejuvenate facades or street level entries, usually by applying a metal sheathing which could be easily removed to reveal the original brickwork.

The structures range in size from one to three stories, providing the offices, banks, restaurants, meeting halls, printing offices, stores (which offered a variety of merchandise and services: dry goods, drugstores, cleaners, grocers, garages, bakeries, furniture, clothing and millinery, jewelers, barbers, plumbers, and billiard halls), as well as other businesses (post office, funeral parlor, automobile dealership, telephone exchange office, theatre, and even a opera house) which were necessary in a bustling community in early day Oklahoma. The facades of red brick, concrete, and sandstone combine a variety of decorative detailing in friezes, pilaster strips, stringcourses, lintels, sills, and parapet walls. Some of the more impressive structures reflect a Richardsonsque use of architectural elements in the blocky design, rusticated stone detailing, and round arched entries and windows. The Victorian variety of colors, materials, textures, and ornamentation help distinguish the buildings and provide visual activity in the townscape.

The visual unity of the district's character lies in the consistency of scale and materials, the compact and uniform set backs from the street, the repetition of visual elements (round arches, rough cut sandstone stringcourses, brick detailing), as well as in the horizontal alignments of the street level display windows, clearstories, bands of windows on the upper levels, and stringcourses. The district is bounded on each end by an abrupt change in scale, materials, design, spacing, and purpose of the newer businesses, including a parking lot and grocery store, residential housing, service station, and railroad right-of-way. The district's boundaries have been the traditional boundaries of the main commercial district since 1899 with only a few other older commercial buildings in poor condition scattered on side streets. The cohesion in this group of buildings accurately reflects the quick emergence of the community from railroad boom town to thriving commercial center.

Some significant and typical buildings contributing to the character of the district:

1. First National Bank Building, northeast corner of Gentry and Broadway: 1898, 2 stories, Romanesque, red brick, commercial building originally housing a bank, telephone company offices, and retail stores. The rusticated sandstone base, brick watertable capped with rusticated sandstone, the broken course of rusticated stone below the series of large round brick arches (which form windows and doorways on the street level), the multiple brick stringcourses above and below the second story windows, the massive plain concrete

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#4 - Current Property Owners  
Checotah Business District

A. & M. Legion Hall 213 W. Gentry Checotah, OK 74426  
Letha Fern Bivins 211 E. Spaulding Checotah, OK 74426  
Jay J. & Thelma Blackburn 403 NW First Checotah, OK 74426  
Virginia Black Highland Park Circle Tyler, TX 75701  
John Buford Box 246 Checotah, OK 74426  
Rubye S. Buford 3603 Country Club Estates #9 Muskogee, OK 74401  
Welza Bynum Checotah, OK 74426  
Checotah Lodge #30, I.O.O.F. c/o Harold Bacon 607 NW 8th Checotah, OK 74426  
Checotah Lodge #86, A.F. & A.M. 213 W. Gentry Checotah, OK 74426  
Betty Chenault 512 SW 4 Checotah, OK 74426 *- owner adjacent*  
G. R. Crumpler 620 Spring Ave. Checotah, OK 74426  
Norma Davidson West Star Route Checotah, OK 74426  
C. R. Futrell 610 W. Chenault Checotah, OK 74426  
Faith Temple, Inc. Corner of Spaulding and Broadway Checotah, OK 74426  
K. L. Garrett and B. W. Garrett 110 SE 7 Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Harman 210 SW First Checotah, OK 74426  
Bob G. Hogan 809 Spring Ave. Checotah, OK 74426  
Margaret E. Koch Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. O. C. Lynn 606 SW 4 Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. John W. McCann 407 W. Spaulding Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Bradley McMinn Route 2 Checotah, OK 74426  
Ann Mason 260 Chamounix Road St. Davids, PA 90809  
Dolores Palmer 511 SW 4 Checotah, OK 74426  
Harvey L. Parker 605 SW 3 Checotah, OK 74426  
People's National Bank 300 W. Gentry Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Qualls c/o Milam King 109 N. Broadway Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Speir 504 SW First Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Speir 411 SW First Checotah, OK 74426  
Harold C. Stout 707 SW 4th Checotah, OK 74426  
Mary Ellen Terry Box 288 Checotah, OK 74426  
Woodrow G. Vandiver 620 W. Chenault Checotah, OK 74426  
Orville Wiser 219 SW 4 Checotah, OK 74426  
John S. Young 905 SW 2 Checotah, OK 74426

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Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Speir c/o Catharine Ninitz P.O. Box 29 Checotah, OK 74426  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Speir c/o Catharine Ninitz P.O. Box 29 Checotah, OK 74426  
Donald E. Stidham c/o Lee Stidham People's National Bank Box 324 Checotah, OK 74426  
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lintels with the second story windows, and the entablature with brackets near the roof-line all contribute to the horizontal character of the building. Each street level entry received different treatment and the rounded corner entry to the bank received distinctive treatment (originally capped by an iron-clad cone-shaped cupola which was removed prior to 1916), including two stylized Doric, tooled sandstone columns resting on large plinthes of rusticated sandstone. These support a rusticated sandstone arched entry capped by a tooled stone entablature with a recessed semicircular clearstory above the wooden panel door with glass. Midway up the second story level on the rounded brick corner is the stone plaque "1898 BANK". This corner building has long been a focal point of the business district at the main intersection.

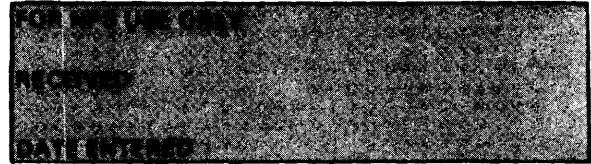
2. I.O.O.F. Building, 221 W. Gentry: 1898, 2 stories, (third story added in 1912), red brick Romanesque Revival commercial building with brick stringcourses and broken brick and sandstone stringcourses marking horizontal divisions. It is also noted for the battlement and three stone carvings above the upper windows (saying, left to right: "1898," "I.O.O.F." and "1912"). The round brick arches with rough-cut sandstone keystones distinguish the upper level windows from the segmental arched windows on the second story. The street level storefront and clearstory have been covered with a recent metal front and awning.

3. 211 W. Gentry: 1901-1902, 2 stories, red brick, Victorian Romanesque commercial building highlighted by the contrasting rough faced sandstone of the bandcourse and the segmented round arched second story windows. The parapet wall with decorative brickwork and carved stone medallions, and the machicolation beneath the stone entablature connect the building horizontally while brick pilaster strips divide the elevation into four bays with paired windows. Before 1914, the second story served as an opera house, an unusual feature for the young community. The lower level has recently been covered with a metal front and awning.

5. Kniseley and Long Building (Hutchison Mercantile Co.), 102 S. Broadway: 1910, 2 stories, Late Victorian red brick commercial building with decorative brickwork friezes. The long vertical double-hung sash windows with transom lights contrast with the horizontal emphasis in the clearstory, stringcourses, and other detailing. Visual contrast is provided by the stone detailing in the series of small round arches and the medallions at the corner of the roofline, the window sills and the name plaque ("1910" and "Kniseley and Long") on the north elevation at the roofline. Although the clearstory and display windows at the street level have been altered (bricking in portion of the windows and covering the clearstory with a metal sign), original detailing is still visible beneath the metal cladding (especially at the corner) and the corner recessed entry still utilizes the column on a squared stone plinthe as support. A side entry on the west elevation leads to a separate shop, distinguished by a brickwork round arched transom above the doorway.

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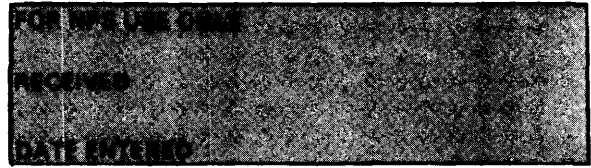
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6. Building north of 106 S. Broadway: 1902-1905, 1 story Late Victorian red brick commercial building accented by the parapet wall with semicircular stone trim and detailing, by the brickwork frieze, and by the stone pilasters flanking the street level entry.
7. Wiser Building, 126 S. Broadway: 1910, 2 stories, red brick, Plains commercial building with four, tall, narrow windows on the second story and with a pair of decorative friezes consisting of stepped rows of brick and edged by pilaster references. The glass storefront has a clearstory above the street level entry. The clearstory and upper level windows have been boarded in, but the street elevation remains essentially unaltered.
8. Bynum's Mercantile, 135 S. Broadway: 1914-1920, 2 stories red brick Plains commercial building with parapet wall edged in stone. The stone is also used for the window sills and the squared decorative paired medallions in the two vertical brick string courses (one above the second story windows and the other at the roofline). The clearstory (currently boarded in with a corrugated metal sign) and sills pairing the upper windows emphasize the horizontal character of the building.
9. Towry Brothers Building, 113 S. Broadway: 1901-1902, 2 stories Late Victorian, red brick commercial building with parapet wall of multiple stringcourses, tall narrow windows on the second story below small, horizontal, rectangular openings flanking a semicircular window with iron grilling. Brick stringcourses and a band of decorative medallions top the clearstory above the street level display windows and entry.
11. and 12. 306 and 308 W. Gentry: 1905-1909, 1 story, simple, red brick, Plains commercial buildings sharing similar storefronts with a single stringcourse near the roofline and with battlement outlined in sandstone. The clearstory and display windows have been replaced with metal frames and glass in keeping with the general outlines of the original storefront.
14. Building on the west side of the alley at Gentry Ave., Block 67: 1914-1920, 1 story Plains commercial red brick garage with a parapet wall and two large windows flanking a wooden garage door entry.
15. Commercial National Bank Building, 301 W. Gentry: 1905-1909, 2 stories, brick commercial building distinguished by the recessed entry and arcade supported by a series of stone piers which extend around both street elevations to the separate storefront entry on the north end of the building. The piers continue visually through the upper level as brick pilasters. The upper level's paired double-hung, wooden-sash windows with transoms add to the vertical character which is broken by the stone pilaster capitals, the plain stone sills and lintels, the brick friezes below the second story windows, and the strong horizontal bands of stepped brick and contrasting stone which continue around the angled corner.

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16. Second building north of 301 W. Gentry: pre-1930, 1 story, small, wooden food stand with wooden awning above the service window. Unusual as a remaining example of early day commercialized eating establishments, it was noted in its day for its good tasting pies and hamburgers.

17. Building south of corner building of the southwest corner of Spaulding and Broadway: 1920-1929, 1 story, Plains commercial structure which was built and served for over fifty years as the Chevrolet dealership. Except for the aluminum replacement door which serves as the customer's entry, the building retains its original appearance with the two large display windows with segmented transoms flanking the customer entry and garage entry. The wooden plank interior wall with a service window separating the garage from the office, and the hanger-type wooden roof supports visible inside add to the character of the garage. The exterior is simply decorated with brickwork friezes, decorative brickwork to give the appearance of pilasters, the concrete banding at the roofline, and the conductor boxes and downspouts on each edge of the front elevation.

18. Southwest corner of Spaulding and Broadway: 1904-1909, 2 stories, brick, Late Victorian building noted for its stone piers supporting a recessed lower level on the front elevation, above which decorative brickwork friezes extend just around the corner. Continuous banding of toothed brick and stone below the second story windows, and two stone bands near the roofline emphasize the horizontal character of the building. Designed as the post office, it is currently in use as apartments and a church, but retains much of its original prominent appearance in the townscape.

Nonconforming intrusions detracting from the integrity of the district:

4. 200 SW Main: post 1930, 1 story, stucco, commercial building with a deeper recessed street elevation than other buildings on the streetscape. The corner entry and the appearance of the building tie this structure with SW Main Street rather than the historic district. Also, since it faces an empty lot across Gentry Ave., this forms the actual visual boundary for the eastern edge of the district.

10. People's National Bank, 300 W. Gentry: 1901-1902, originally in two buildings (south building 1 story; corner building 2 stories); remodeled in the 1970s as 1 story and 1 building, a modern, low profile commercial building divided into bays of pre-poured textured concrete slabs. Part of the original red brick is visible on the alley wall. Although the original structure has been irreversibly altered, the angled corner retained in the remodeling emphasizes the continued visual importance of this main intersection. Significantly, this building continues to house a bank, currently the only remaining bank in Checotah, a town whose main intersection used to boast three banks. The low profile of the structure helps minimize some of its intrusive nature in the district.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Checotah Business District

Checotah Enquirer, March 7, 1902 (Reprint, Bicentennial Edition).

Clarkson's Fire Map, "Checotah, Creek Nation, Indian Territory," February, 1902.

McIntosh County Democrat (100th Anniversary Edition), v. 64, no. 31, June 8, 1972.

Sanborn Map Company, "Checotah, Oklahoma," June 1909; December, 1914; March, 1920; November, 1929.

Sanborn-Perris Map Company, "Checotah, Indian Territory," December, 1898; March, 1901; February, 1905.

Interviews:

Dick Bateman, Checotah, June 30, 1980

Faye Bundy, Checotah, May 29, 1980

Ed Lynn, Checotah, July 1, 1980

Bessie Tabor, Checotah, June 3, 1980



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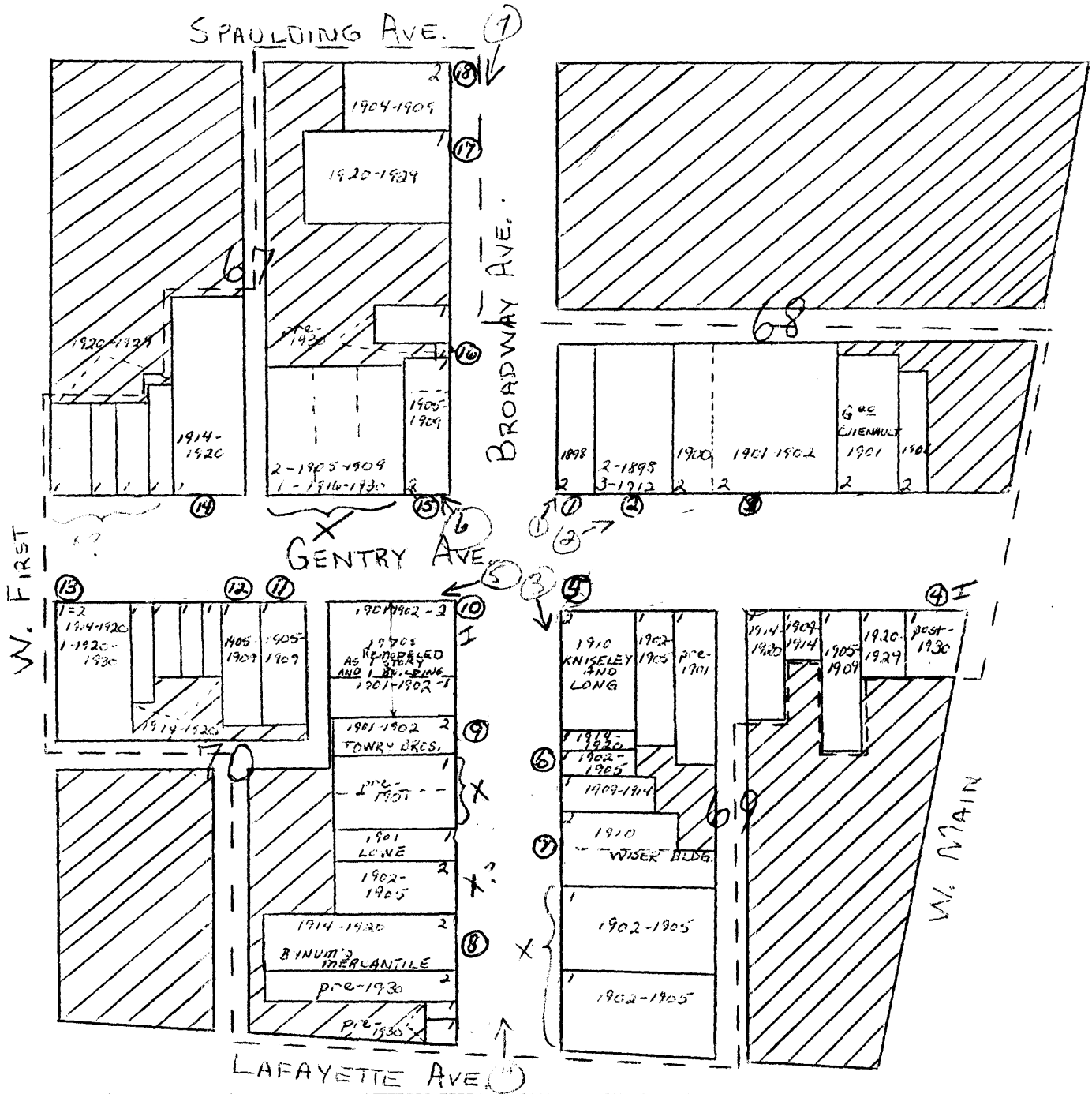
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Checotah Business District

Area encompassing all buildings which face Gentry Avenue between West First and West Main on either side; and all buildings which face Broadway Avenue extending from Lafayette Avenue to Spaulding Avenue on the west side and extending on the east side from Lafayette Avenue to the alley between Gentry and Spaulding Avenue, (See sketch map of district boundaries). Boundaries were chosen after a windshield survey and historical research which indicated that these boundaries form a visual unit from the main intersection of Gentry and Broadway, extending one block in each direction. It incorporates most of the extant historic business district and beyond these boundaries newer construction dominates.

# CHECOTAH BUSINESS DISTRICT



1 - included interior  
 2 - included exterior

NO photo available  
 all photo  
 5/5/1972

--- DISTRICT BOUNDARY

0 50 100 150 200 SCALE

(14) NUMBER KEYS TO DESCRIPTION

AREA NOT INCLUDED IN DISTRICT'S BUILDINGS

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1898-1930      **Builder/Architect** N/A

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

Checotah is an important example of the effect of railroads on settlement patterns and has served as a major commercial center since the 1890s. Following 1872, this location became a major shipping point for cattle by rail on the M.K.&T. (the Katy, the first railroad in Indian Territory). By 1893, merchants began establishing the business district of Checotah, taking advantage of the potential business opportunities relative to the Katy rail service. This commercial center served a wide area between the North Canadian River and Muskogee.

The character and prosperity of the district was well established between 1898 and 1930 with the Richardson Romanesque, Late Victorian and Plains Commercial structures. The brick and sandstone buildings of the business district form a cohesive visual unit extending out from the major intersection in town. Beyond the boundaries of the business district, newer construction, open spaces, and residential structures predominate.

The buildings have had few structural alterations and are in good condition. Included within this district is the area on the north side of Gentry, east of Broadway known as the "Gentry Block," characterized by the series of two and three story brick Richardsonesque structures. Other uniquely significant structures include the former post office, a small wooden food stand (which for years was known for its good hamburgers and pies), and a Chevrolet dealership's building (built as such and serving the community from that location for over fifty years). The district still dominates the townscape and would be a good candidate for a townscape project.

There are few intrusions of buildings completed since 1930, except for the People's National Bank and it is actually an old brick two story which has been remodelled into a contemporary, low-profile one story textured concrete structure. The Faith Tabernacle is also included since it has been an integral part of the business district's townscape since 1909 and originally housed the post office.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 6 acres

Quadrangle name Checotah, OK

Quadrangle scale 7.5

UMT References

A	1 1 5	2 7 1 0 8 0	3 9 2 7 9 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Karen Bode Curths

organization Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey

date February, 1981

street & number Oklahoma State University

telephone (405) 624-5678

city or town Stillwater

state Oklahoma

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title SHPO

date 7-19-82

For HCRS use only

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

Keeper of the National Register

date 9/15/82

Attest:  
Chief of Registration

date